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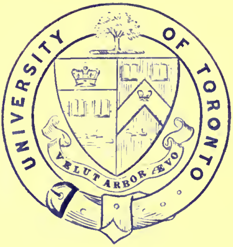

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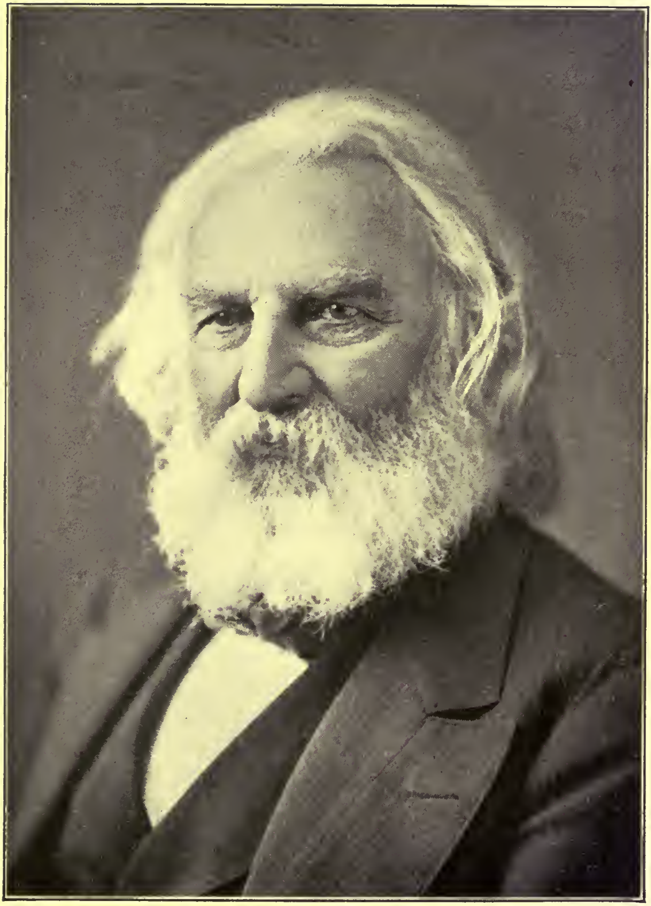

Henry W. Longfellow

THE CAMBRIDGE BOOK OF POETRY AND SONG . . . .

NEW YORK
THOMAS Y. CROWELL
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THE

CAMBRIDGE BOOK

OF

POETRY AND SONG

SELECTED FROM

ENGLISH AND AMERICAN AUTHORS

BY

CHARLOTTE FISKE BATES

AUTHOR OF "RISK, AND OTHER POEMS"
COMPILER OF "THE LONGFELLOW BIRTHDAY BOOK," "SEVEN VOICES OF SYMPATHY"

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HENRY ABBEY.

THE CALIPH'S MAGNANIMITY.

A TRAVELLER across the desert waste
Found on his way a cool, palm-shaded spring,
And the fresh water seemed to his pleased taste,
In the known world, the most delicious thing.
"Great is the caliph!" said he; "I for him
Will fill my leathern bottle to the brim."

He sank the bottle, forcing it to drink
Until the gurgle ceased in its lank throat;
And as he started onward, smiled to think
That he for thirst bore God's sole antidote.
Days after, with obeisance low and meet,
He laid his present at the caliph's feet.

Forthwith the issue of the spring was poured
Into a cup, on whose embossed outside,
Jewels, like solid water, shaped a gourd.
The caliph drank, and seemed well satisfied,
Nay, wisely pleased, and straightway gave command
To line with gold the man's work-hardened hand.

The courtiers, looking at the round reward,
Fancied that some unheard-of virtue graced
The bottled burden borne for their loved lord,
And of the liquid gift asked but to taste.
The caliph answered from his potent throne:
"Touch not the water; it is mine alone!"

But soon — after the humble giver went,
O'erflowing with delight, which bathed his face —
The caliph told his courtiers the intent
Of his denial, saying: "It is base
Not to accept a kindness when expressed
By no low motive of self-interest.

"The water was a gift of love to me,
Which I with golden gratitude repaid.
I would not let the honest giver see
That, on its way, the crystal of the shade
Had changed, and was impure; for so, no less,
His love, thus scorned, had turned to bitterness.

"I granted not the warm, distasteful draught
To asking lips, because of firm mistrust,
Or kindly fear, that, if another quaffed,
He would reveal his feeling of disgust,
And he, who meant a favor, would depart,
Bearing a wounded and dejected heart."

MAY IN KINGSTON.

Our old colonial town is new with May:
The loving trees that clasp across the streets,
Grow greener sleeved with bursting buds each day.
Still this year's May the last year's May repeats;
Even the old stone houses half renew
Their youth and beauty, as the old trees do.

High over all, like some divine desire
Above our lower thoughts of daily care,
The gray, religious, heaven-touching spire
Adds to the quiet of the springtime air;
And over roofs the birds create a sea,
That has no shore, of their May melody.

Down through the lowlands now of lightest green,
The undecided creek winds on its way.
There the lithe willow bends with graceful mien,
And sees its likeness in the depths all day;
While in the orchards, flushed with May's warm light,
The bride-like fruit-trees dwell, attired in white.

But yonder loom the mountains old and grand,
That off, along dim distance, reach afar,
And high and vast, against the sunset stand,
A dreamy range, long and irregular—
A caravan that never passes by,
Whose camel-backs are laden with the sky.

So, like a caravan, our outlived years
Loom on the introspective landscape seen
Within the heart: and now, when May appears,
And earth renews its vernal bloom and green,
We but renew our longing, and we say:
"Oh, would that life might ever be all May!

"Would that the bloom of youth which is so brief,
The bloom, the May, the fullness ripe and fair
Of cheek and limb, might fade not as the leaf;
Would that the heart might not grow old with care,
Nor love turn bitter, nor fond hope decay;
But soul and body lead a life of May!"

FACIEBAT.

As thoughts possess the fashion of the mood
That gave them birth, so every deed we do
Partakes of our inborn disquietude
Which spurns the old and reaches toward the new.
The noblest works of human art and pride
Show that their makers were not satisfied.

For, looking down the ladder of our deeds,
The rounds seem slender; all past work appears
Unto the doer faulty; the heart bleeds,
And pale Regret comes weltering in tears,
To think how poor our best has been, how vain,
Beside the excellence we would attain.

SARAH FLOWER ADAMS.

NEARER, MY GOD, TO THEE.

NEARER, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee:
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me,
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.

Though like a wanderer,
Daylight all gone,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone,
Yet in my dreams, I'd be
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.

There let the way appear
Steps up to heaven;
All that thou sendest me
In mercy given,
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.

Then with my waking thoughts,
Bright with thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs,
Bethel I'll raise;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.

Or if on joyful wing,
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot
Upward I fly,
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

APOSTROPHE TO LIBERTY.

O LIBERTY, thou goddess heavenly bright,
Profuse of bliss, and pregnant with delight!
Eternal pleasures in thy presence reign,
And smiling plenty leads thy wanton train;
Eased of her load, subjection grows more light,
And poverty looks cheerful in thy sight;
Thou mak'st the gloomy face of nature gay,
Giv'st beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day.
Thee, goddess, thee, Britannia's isle adores;
How has she oft exhausted all her stores,
How oft in fields of death thy presence sought,
Nor thinks the mighty prize too dearly bought!
On foreign mountains may the sun refine
The grape's soft juice, and mellow it to wine;
With citron groves adorn a distant soil,
And the fat olive swell with floods of oil:
We envy not the warmer clime, that lies
In ten degrees of more indulgent skies;
Nor at the coarseness of our heaven repine,
Though o'er our heads the frozen Pleiads shine:
'Tis liberty that crowns Britannia's isle,
And makes her barren rocks and her bleak mountains smile.

CATO'S SOLILOQUY.

It must be so — Plato, thou reason'st well! —
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror,
Of falling into nought? why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untried being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass?
The wide, th' unbounded prospect lies before me;
But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.
Here will I hold. If there's a power above us —
And that there is, all nature cries aloud
Through all her works — he must delight in virtue;
And that which he delights in must be happy.
But when? or where? This world was made for Cæsar.
I'm weary of conjectures. This must end them.
[*Laying his hand on his sword.*]
Thus am I doubly armed: my death and life,
My bane and antidote, are both before me:
This in a moment brings me to an end;
But this informs me I shall never die.
The soul, secured in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the wars of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.
What means this heaviness that hangs upon me?
This lethargy that creeps through all my senses?
Nature oppressed, and harassed out with care,
Sinks down to rest. This once I'll favor her,
That my awakened soul may take her flight,
Renewed in all her strength, and fresh with life,
An offering fit for heaven. Let guilt or fear
Disturb man's rest: Cato knows neither of them;
Indifferent in his choice to sleep or die.

MARK AKENSIDE.

ON A SERMON AGAINST GLORY.

Come then, tell me, sage divine,
  Is it an offence to own
That our bosoms e'er incline
  Toward immortal Glory's throne?
For with me nor pomp, nor pleasure,
Bourbon's might, Braganza's treasure,
So can fancy's dream rejoice,
So conciliate reason's choice,
As one approving word of her impartial voice.

If to spurn at noble praise
Be the passport to thy heaven,
Follow thou those gloomy ways—
No such law to me was given;
Nor, I trust, shall I deplore me,
Faring like my friends before me;
Nor an holier place desire
Than Timoleon's arms acquire,
And Tully's curule chair, and Milton's golden lyre.

[*From Pleasures of the Imagination.*]

THE DEVELOPMENT OF POETIC AND ARTISTIC CREATIONS.

BY these mysterious ties, the busy power
Of memory her ideal train preserves
Entire; or when they would elude her watch,
Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste
Of dark oblivion; thus collecting all
The various forms of being, to present
Before the curious eye of mimic art
Their largest choice: like Spring's unfolded blooms
Exhaling sweetness, that the skilful bee
May taste at will from their selected spoils
To work her dulcet food. For not the expanse
Of living lakes in summer's noontide calm,
Reflects the bordering shade and sun-bright heavens
With fairer semblance; not the sculptured gold
More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace,
Than he whose birth the sister-powers of art
Propitious viewed, and from his genial star
Shed influence to the seeds of fancy kind,
Than his attempered bosom must preserve
The seal of nature. There alone, unchanged
Her form remains. The balmy walks of May
There breathe perennial sweets: the trembling chord
Resounds forever in the abstracted ear,
Melodious; and the virgin's radiant eye,
Superior to disease, to grief, and time,
Shines with unbating lustre. Thus at length
Endowed with all that nature can bestow,
The child of fancy oft in silence bends
O'er these mixed treasures of his pregnant breast
With conscious pride. From them he oft resolves
To frame he knows not what excelling things,
And win he knows not what sublime reward
Of praise and wonder. By degrees the mind
Feels her young nerves dilate: the plastic powers
Labor for action: blind emotions heave
His bosom; and with loveliest frenzy caught,
From earth to heaven he rolls his daring eye,
From heaven to earth. Anon ten thousand shapes,
Like spectres trooping to the wizard's call,
Flit swift before him. From the womb of earth,
From ocean's bed they come: the eternal heavens
Disclose their splendors, and the dark abyss
Pours out her births unknown. With fixed gaze
He marks the rising phantoms. Now compares
Their different forms; now blends them, now divides;
Enlarges and extenuates by turns;
Opposes, ranges in fantastic bands,
And infinitely varies. Hither now,
Now thither fluctuates his inconstant aim,

With endless choice perplexed. At length his plan
Begins to open. Lucid order dawns;
And as from Chaos old the jarring seeds
Of nature at the voice divine repaired
Each to its place, till rosy earth unveiled
Her fragrant bosom, and the joyful sun
Sprung up the blue serene; by swift degrees
Thus disentangled, his entire design
Emerges. Colors mingle, features join,
And lines converge: the fainter parts retire;
The fairer eminent in light advance;
And every image on its neighbor smiles.
Awhile he stands, and with a father's joy
Contemplates. Then with Promethean art
Into its proper vehicle he breathes
The fair conception which, embodied thus,
And permanent, becomes to eyes or ears
An object ascertained: while thus informed,
The various objects of his mimic skill,
The consonance of sounds, the featured rock,
The shadowy picture, and impassioned verse,
Beyond their proper powers attract the soul
By that expressive semblance, while in sight
Of nature's great original we scan
The lively child of art; while line by line,
And feature after feature, we refer
To that divine exemplar whence it stole
Those animating charms. Thus beauty's palm
Betwixt them wavering hangs: applauding love
Doubts where to choose; and mortal man aspires
To tempt creative praise.

[*From Pleasures of the Imagination.*]

RICHES OF A MAN OF TASTE.

What though not all
Of mortal offspring can attain the heights
Of envied life; though only few possess
Patrician treasures or imperial state;
Yet nature's care, to all her children just,
With richer treasures and an ampler state,
Endows, at large, whatever happy man
Will deign to use them. His the city's pomp,
The rural honors his. Whate'er adorns
The princely dome, the column and the arch,
The breathing marbles and the sculptured gold,
Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim,
His tuneful breast enjoys. For him, the Spring
Distils her dews, and from the silken gem
Its lucid leaves unfolds: for him, the hand
Of Autumn tinges every fertile branch
With blooming gold, and blushes like the morn.
Each passing hour sheds tribute from her wings;
And still new beauties meet his lonely walk,
And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze
Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes
The setting sun's effulgence, not a strain
From all the tenants of the warbling shade
Ascends, but whence his bosom can partake
Fresh pleasure unreproved. Nor thence partakes
Fresh pleasure only: for th' attentive mind,
By this harmonious action on her powers,

Becomes herself harmonious: wont so oft
In outward things to meditate the charm
Of sacred order, soon she seeks at home
To find a kindred order to exert
Within herself this elegance of love,
This fair inspired delight: her temper'd powers
Refine at length, and every passion wears
A chaster, milder, more attractive mien.

[*From Pleasures of the Imagination.*]

MENTAL BEAUTY.

THUS doth beauty dwell
There most conspicuous, e'en in outward shape,
Where dawns the high expression of a mind:
By steps conducting our enraptured search
To that eternal origin, whose power,
Through all th' unbounded symmetry of things,
Like rays effulging from the parent sun,
This endless mixture of her charms diffused.
Mind, mind alone, — bear witness, earth and heaven! —
The living fountains in itself contains
Of beauteous and sublime: here, hand in hand,
Sit paramount the graces; here enthroned,
Celestial Venus, with divinest airs,
Invites the soul to never-fading joy.

[*From Pleasures of the Imagination.*]

ASPIRATIONS AFTER THE INFINITE.

SAY, why was man so eminently raised
Amid the vast creation; why ordain'd
Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;
But that th' Omnipotent might send him forth
In sight of mortal and immortal powers,
As on a boundless theatre, to run
The great career of justice; to exalt
His generous aim to all diviner deeds;
To chase each partial purpose from his breast,
And through the mists of passion and of sense,
And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,
To hold his course unfaltering, while the voice
Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent
Of nature, calls him to his high reward,
Th' applauding smile of heaven? Else wherefore burns
In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope,
That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
And mocks possession? wherefore darts the mind,
With such resistless ardor, to embrace
Majestic forms; impatient to be free;
Spurning the gross control of wilful might;
Proud of the strong contention of her toils;
Proud to be daring?

. . . . .

For from the birth
Of mortal man, the sovereign Maker said,
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Not in the fading echoes of renown,
Power's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flowery lap,
The soul should find enjoyment: but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Through all th' ascent of things enlarge her view,
Till every bound at length should disappear,
And infinite perfection close the scene.

LUCY EVELINA AKERMAN.

NOTHING BUT LEAVES.

"He found nothing thereon but leaves."
Matt. xxi. 19.

NOTHING but leaves; the spirit grieves
Over the wasted life:
Sin committed while conscience slept,
Promises made but never kept,
Hatred, battle, strife;
Nothing but leaves!

Nothing but leaves; no garner'd sheaves
Of life's fair, ripen'd grain;
Words, idle words, for earnest deeds;
We sow our seeds — lo! tares and weeds;
We reap with toil and pain
Nothing but leaves!

Nothing but leaves; memory weaves
No veil to screen the past:
As we retrace our weary way,
Counting each lost and misspent day —
We find, sadly, at last,
Nothing but leaves!

And shall we meet the Master so,
Bearing our wither'd leaves?
The Saviour looks for perfect fruit,—
We stand before him, humbled, mute;
Waiting the words he breathes,—
"Nothing but leaves!"

◆

JAMES ALDRICH.

A DEATH-BED.

HER suffering ended with the day;
Yet lived she at its close,
And breathed the long, long night away,
In statue-like repose.

But when the sun, in all his state,
Illumed the eastern skies,
She passed through Glory's morning-gate,
And walked in Paradise!

◆

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.

THE BALLAD OF BABIE BELL.

HAVE you not heard the poets tell
How came the dainty Babie Bell
Into this world of ours?
The gates of heaven were left ajar:
With folded hands and dreamy eyes,
Wandering out of Paradise,
She saw this planet, like a star,
Hung in the glistening depths of even, —
Its bridges, running to and fro,
O'er which the white-winged Angels go,
Bearing the holy Dead to heaven.
She touched a bridge of flowers, — those feet
So light they did not bend the bells
Of the celestial asphodels!
They fell like dew upon the flowers,
Then all the air grew strangely sweet!
And thus came dainty Babie Bell
Into this world of ours.

She came and brought delicious May,
The swallows built beneath the eaves;
Like sunlight in and out the leaves,
The robins went the livelong day;

The lily swung its noiseless bell,
And o'er the porch the trembling vine
Seemed bursting with its veins of wine.
How sweetly, softly, twilight fell!
O, earth was full of singing-birds,
And opening spring-tide flowers,
When the dainty Babie Bell
Came to this world of ours!

O Babie, dainty Babie Bell,
How fair she grew from day to day!
What woman-nature filled her eyes,
What poetry within them lay:
Those deep and tender twilight eyes,
So full of meaning, pure and bright
As if she yet stood in the light
Of those oped gates of Paradise.
And so we loved her more and more;
Ah, never in our hearts before
Was love so lovely born.
We felt we had a link between
This real world and that unseen, —
The land beyond the morn.
And for the love of those dear eyes,
For love of her whom God led forth,
(The mother's being ceased on earth
When Babie came from Paradise,) —
For love of Him who smote our lives,
And woke the chords of joy and pain,
We said, *Dear Christ!* — Our hearts bent down
Like violets after rain.

And now the orchards, which were white
And red with blossoms when she came,
Were rich in autumn's mellow prime:
The clustered apples burnt like flame,
The soft-cheeked peaches blushed and fell,
The ivory chestnut burst its shell,
The grapes hung purpling in the grange:
And time wrought just as rich a change
In little Babie Bell.

Her lissome form more perfect grew,
And in her features we could trace,
In softened curves, her mother's face!
Her angel-nature ripened too.
We thought her lovely when she came,
But she was holy, saintly now;
Around her pale angelic brow
We saw a slender ring of flame!

God's hand had taken away the seal.
That held the portals of her speech;
And oft she said a few strange words
Whose meaning lay beyond our reach.
She never was a child to us,
We never held her being's key;
We could not teach her holy things:
She was Christ's self in purity.

It came upon us by degrees:
We saw its shadow ere it fell,
The knowledge that our God had sent
His messenger for Babie Bell.
We shuddered with unlanguaged pain,
And all our hopes were changed to fears,
And all our thoughts ran into tears
Like sunshine into rain.
We cried aloud in our belief,
"O, smite us gently, gently, God!
Teach us to bend and kiss the rod,
And perfect grow through grief."
Ah, how we loved her, God can tell;
Her heart was folded deep in ours.
Our hearts are broken, Babie Bell!

At last he came, the messenger,
The messenger from unseen lands
And what did dainty Babie Bell?
She only crossed her little hands,
She only looked more meek and fair!
We parted back her silken hair:
We wove the roses round her brow,
White buds, the summer's drifted snow, —
Wrapt her from head to foot in flowers!
And thus went dainty Babie Bell
Out of this world of ours!

DESTINY.

THREE roses, wan as moonlight and weighed down
Each with its loveliness as with a crown,
Drooped in a florist's window in a town.

The first a lover bought. It lay at rest,
Like flower on flower, that night, on Beauty's breast.

The second rose, as virginal and fair,
Shrunk in the tangles of a harlot's hair.

The third, a widow, with new grief made wild,
Shut in the icy palm of her dead child.

AN UNTIMELY THOUGHT.

I WONDER what day of the week —
I wonder what month of the year —
Will it be midnight, or morning,
And who will bend over my bier?

— What a hideous fancy to come
As I wait, at the foot of the stair,
While Lilian gives the last touch
To her robe, or the rose in her hair.

Do I like your new dress — pompadour?
And do I like *you?* On my life,
You are eighteen, and not a day more,
And have not been six years my wife.

Those two rosy boys in the crib
Up stairs are not ours, to be sure! —
You are just a sweet bride in her bloom,
All sunshine, and snowy, and pure.

As the carriage rolls down the dark street
The little wife laughs and makes cheer;
But . . . I wonder what day of the week,
I wonder what month of the year.

NAMELESS PAIN.

IN my nostrils the summer wind
Blows the exquisite scent of the rose!
O for the golden, golden wind,
Breaking the buds as it goes,
Breaking the buds, and bending the grass,
And spilling the scent of the rose!

O wind of the summer morn,
Tearing the petals in twain,
Wafting the fragrant soul
Of the rose through valley and plain,
I would you could tear my heart to-day,
And scatter its nameless pain.

UNSUNG.

As sweet as the breath that goes
From the lips of the white rose,
As weird as the elfin lights
That glimmer of frosty nights,
As wild as the winds that tear
The curled red leaf in the air,
Is the song I have never sung.

In slumber, a hundred times
I have said the mystic rhymes,
But ere I open my eyes
This ghost of a poem flies;
Of the interfluent strains
Not even a note remains:
I know by my pulses' beat
It was something wild and sweet,
And my heart is strangely stirred
By an unremembered word!

I strive, but I strive in vain,
To recall the lost refrain.
On some miraculous day
Perhaps it will come and stay;
In some unimagined Spring
I may find my voice, and sing
The song I have never sung.

RENCONTRE.

Toiling across the Mer de Glace
I thought of, longed for thee;
What miles between us stretched, alas!
What miles of land and sea!

My foe, undreamed of, at my side
Stood suddenly, like Fate.
For those who love, the world is wide,
But not for those who hate.

THE FADED VIOLET.

What thought is folded in thy leaves!
What tender thought, what speechless pain!
I hold thy faded lips to mine,
Thou darling of the April rain!

I hold thy faded lips to mine,
Though scent and azure tint are fled—
O dry, mute lips! ye are the type
Of something in me cold and dead;

Of something wilted like thy leaves;
Of fragrance flown, of beauty dim;
Yet, for the love of those white hands,
That found thee by a river's brim —

That found thee when thy dewy mouth
Was purpled as with stains of wine —
For love of her who love forgot,
I hold thy faded lips to mine.

That thou shouldst live when I am dead,
When hate is dead, for me, and wrong,
For this, I use my subtlest art,
For this, I fold thee in my song.

AFTER THE RAIN.

The rain has ceased, and in my room
The sunshine pours an airy flood;
And on the church's dizzy vane
The ancient cross is bathed in blood.

From out the dripping ivy-leaves,
Antiquely-carven, gray and high,
A dormer, facing westward, looks
Upon the village like an eye:

And now it glimmers in the sun,
A globe of gold, a disc, a speck:
And in the belfry sits a dove
With purple ripples on her neck.

PURSUIT AND POSSESSION.

When I behold what pleasure is Pursuit,
What life, what glorious eagerness it is;
Then mark how full Possession falls from this,
How fairer seems the blossom than the fruit —
I am perplext, and often stricken mute
Wondering which attained the higher bliss,
The wingéd insect, or the chrysalis
It thrust aside with unreluctant foot.
Spirit of verse that still elud'st my art,
Thou airy phantom that dost ever haunt me,
O never, never rest upon my heart,
If when I have thee I shall little want thee!
Still flit away in moonlight, rain, and dew,
Will-o'-the-wisp, that I may still pursue!

SLEEP.

When to soft Sleep we give ourselves away,
And in a dream as in a fairy bark
Drift on and on through the enchanted dark
To purple daybreak — little thought we pay
To that sweet bitter world we know by day.
We are clean quit of it, as is a lark
So high in heaven no human eye may mark

The thin swift pinion cleaving through the gray.
Till we awake ill fate can do no ill
The resting heart shall not take up again
The heavy load that yet must make it bleed;
For this brief space the loud world's voice is still,
No faintest echo of it brings us pain.
How will it be when we shall sleep indeed?

MASKS.

Black Tragedy lets slip her grim disguise
And shows you laughing lips and roguish eyes;
But when, unmasked, gay Comedy appears,
How wan her cheeks are, and what heavy tears!

THE ROSE.

Fixed to her necklace, like another gem,
A rose she wore — the flower June made for her;
Fairer it looked than when upon the stem,
And must, indeed, have been much happier.

MAPLE LEAVES.

October turned my maple's leaves to gold;
The most are gone now; here and there one lingers;
Soon these will slip from out the twigs' weak hold,
Like coins between a dying miser's fingers.

TO ANY POET.

Out of the thousand verses you have writ,
If Time spare none, you will not care at all;
If Time spare one, you will not know of it:
Nor shame nor fame can scale a churchyard wall.

CECIL FRANCES ALEXANDER.

THE BURIAL OF MOSES.

"And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day."

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
  On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab
  There lies a lonely grave.
And no man knows that sepulchre,
  And no man saw it e'er,
For the angels of God upturned the sod
  And laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral
  That ever pass'd on earth;
But no man heard the trampling,
  Or saw the train go forth —
Noiselessly as the daylight
  Comes back when night is done,
And the crimson streak on ocean's cheek
  Grows into the great sun.

Noiselessly as the spring-time
  Her crown of verdure weaves,
And all the trees on all the hills
  Open their thousand leaves;
So without sound of music,
  Or voice of them that wept,

Silently down from the mountain's crown
The great procession swept.

Perchance the bald old eagle
On grey Beth-peor's height,
Out of his lonely eyrie
Look'd on the wondrous sight;
Perchance the lion stalking,
Still shuns that hallow'd spot,
For beast and bird have seen and heard
That which man knoweth not.

But when the warrior dieth,
His comrades in the war,
With arms reversed and muffled drum,
Follow his funeral car;
They show the banners taken,
They tell his battles won,
And after him lead his masterless steed,
While peals the minute gun.

Amid the noblest of the land
We lay the sage to rest,
And give the bard an honor'd place,
With costly marble drest,
In the great minster transept
Where lights like glories fall,
And the organ rings, and the sweet choir sings
Along the emblazon'd wall.

This was the truest warrior
That ever buckled sword,
This the most gifted poet
That ever breathed a word;
And never earth's philosopher
Traced, with his golden pen,
On the deathless page, truths half so sage
As he wrote down for men.

And had he not high honor,—
The hillside for a pall,
To lie in state while angels wait
With stars for tapers tall,
And the dark rock-pines like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave,
And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
To lay him in the grave?

In that strange grave without a name,
Whence his uncoffin'd clay
Shall break again, O wondrous thought!
Before the Judgment Day,
And stand with glory wrapt around
On the hills he never trod,
And speak of the strife that won our life
With the Incarnate Son of God.

O lonely grave in Moab's land!
O dark Beth-peor's hill!
Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
And teach them to be still.
God hath His mysteries of grace,
Ways that we cannot tell;
He hides them deep, like the hidden sleep
Of him He loved so well.

* * *

HENRY ALFORD.

THE AGED OAK AT OAKLEY.

I WAS a young fair tree;
Each spring with quivering green
My boughs were clad; and far
Down the deep vale a light
Shone from me on the eyes
Of those who pass'd,—a light
That told of sunny days,
And blossoms, and blue sky;
For I was ever first
Of all the grove to hear
The soft voice under ground
Of the warm-working spring;
And ere my brethren stirr'd
Their sheathed bud, the kine,

And the kine's keeper, came
Slow up the valley path,
And laid them underneath
My cool and rustling leaves;
And I could feel them there
As in the quiet shade
They stood with tender thoughts,
That pass'd along their life
Like wings on a still lake,
Blessing me; and to God,
The blessed God, who cares
For all my little leaves,
Went up the silent praise;
And I was glad with joy
Which life of laboring things
Ill knows,—the joy that sinks—
Into a life of rest.
Ages have fled since then:
But deem not my pierced trunk
And scanty leafage serve
No high behest; my name
Is sounded far and wide;
And in the Providence
That guides the steps of men,
Hundreds have come to view
My grandeur in decay;
And there hath pass'd from me
A quiet influence
Into the minds of men:
The silver head of age,
The majesty of laws,
The very name of God,
And holiest things that are
Have won upon the heart
Of humankind the more,
For that I stand to meet
With vast and bleaching trunk,
The rudeness of the sky.

ELIZABETH AKERS ALLEN.

ENDURANCE.

How much the heart may bear, and yet not break!
How much the flesh may suffer, and not die!
I question much if any pain or ache
Of soul or body brings our end more nigh;
Death chooses his own time; till that is sworn,
All evils may be borne.

We shrink and shudder at the surgeon's knife,
Each nerve recoiling from the cruel steel
Whose edge seems searching for the quivering life,
Yet to our sense the bitter pangs reveal,
That still, although the trembling flesh be torn,
This also can be borne.

We see a sorrow rising in our way,
And try to flee from the approaching ill;
We seek some small escape; we weep and pray;
But when the blow falls, then our hearts are still;
Not that the pain is of its sharpness shorn,
But that it can be borne.

We wind our life about another life;
We hold it closer, dearer than our own:
Anon it faints and fails in deathly strife,
Leaving us stunned, and stricken, and alone;
But ah! we do not die with those we mourn,—
This also can be borne.

Behold, we live through all things,—famine, thirst,
Bereavement, pain; all grief and misery,
All woe and sorrow; life inflicts its worst
On soul and body,—but we cannot die.
Though we be sick, and tired, and faint and worn,—
Lo, all things can be borne!

WHERE THE ROSES GREW.

This is where the roses grew,
In the summer that is gone;
Fairer bloom or richer hue
Never summer shone upon:
O, the glories vanished hence!
O, the sad imperfect tense!

This is where the roses grew
When the July days were long, —
When the garden all day through
Echoed with delight and song; —
Hark! the dead and broken stalks
Eddying down the windy walks!

Never was a desert waste,
Where no blossom-life is born,
Half so dreary and unblest,
Half so lonesome and forlorn,
Since in this we dimly see
All the bliss that *used to be*.

Where the roses used to grow!
And the west-wind's wailing words
Tell in whispers faint and low
Of the famished humming-birds, —
Of the bees which search in vain
For the honey-cells again!

This is where the roses grew,
Till the ground was all perfume,
And, whenever zephyrs blew,
Carpeted with crimson bloom!
Now the chill and scentless air,
Sweeps the flower-plats brown and bare.

Hearts have gardens sad as this,
Where the roses bloom no more, —
Gardens where no summer bliss
Can the summer bloom restore, —
Where the snow melts not away
At the warming kiss of May; —

Gardens where the vernal morns
Never shed their sunshine down, —
Where are only stems and thorns,
Veiled in dead leaves, curled and brown, —
Gardens where we only see
Where the roses *used to be!*

LAST.

Friend, whose smile has come to be
Very precious unto me,
Though I know I drank not first,
Of your love's bright fountain burst,
Yet I grieve not for the past,
So you only love me last!

Other souls may find their joy
In the blind love of a boy:
Give me that which years have tried,
Disciplined and purified, —
Such as, braving sun and blast
You will bring to me at last!

There are brows more fair than mine,
Eyes of more bewitching shine,
Other hearts more fit, in truth,
For the passion of your youth;
But, their transient empire past,
You will surely love me last!

Wing away your summer time,
Find a love in every clime,
Roam in liberty and light, —
I shall never stay your flight;
For I know, when all is past,
You will come to me at last!

Change and flutter as you will,
I shall smile securely still;
Patiently I trust and wait
Though you tarry long and late:
Prize your spring till it be past,
Only, only love me last!

ROCK ME TO SLEEP.

Backward, turn backward, O Time in your flight,
Make me a child again just for to-night!
Mother, come back from the echoless shore,
Take me again to your heart as of yore;

Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care,
Smooth the few silver threads out of my hair;
Over my slumbers your loving watch keep;
Rock me to sleep, mother, — rock me to sleep!

Backward, flow backward, O tide of the years!
I am so weary of toil and of tears, —
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain, —
Take them, and give me my childhood again!
I have grown weary of dust and decay, —
Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away;
Weary of sowing for others to reap; —
Rock me to sleep, mother, — rock me to sleep!

Tired of the hollow, the base, the untrue,
Mother, O mother, my heart calls for you!
Many a summer the grass has grown green,
Blossomed and faded, our faces between:
Yet, with strong yearning and passionate pain,
Long I to-night for your presence again.
Come from the silence so long and so deep; —
Rock me to sleep, mother, — rock me to sleep!

Over my heart in the days that are flown,
No love like mother-love ever has shone;
No other worship abides and endures, —
Faithful, unselfish, and patient like yours:
None like a mother can charm away pain
From the sick soul and the world-weary brain.
Slumber's soft calm o'er my heavy lids creep; —
Rock me to sleep, mother, — rock me to sleep!

Come, let your brown hair, just lighted with gold,
Fall on your shoulders again as of old;
Let it drop over my forehead to-night,
Shading my faint eyes away from the light;
For with its sunny-edged shadows once more
Haply will throng the sweet visions of yore;
Lovingly, softly, its bright billows sweep; —
Rock me to sleep, mother, — rock me to sleep!

Mother, dear mother, the years have been long
Since I last listened your lullaby song:
Sing, then, and unto my soul it shall seem
Womanhood's years have been only a dream.
Clasped to your heart in a loving embrace,
With your light lashes just sweeping my face,
Never hereafter to wake or to weep; —
Rock me to sleep, mother, — rock me to sleep!

UNTIL DEATH.

Make me no vows of constancy, dear friend,
To love me, though I die, thy whole life long,
And love no other till thy days shall end;
Nay, it were rash and wrong.

If thou canst love another, be it so;
I would not reach out of my quiet grave
To bind thy heart, if it should choose to go: —
Love should not be a slave.

My placid ghost, I trust, will walk serene
In clearer light than gilds those earthly morns,
Above the jealousies and envies keen
Which sow this life with thorns.

Thou wouldst not feel my shadowy caress,
If, after death, my soul should linger here;
Men's hearts crave tangible, close tenderness,
Love's presence, warm and near.

It would not make me sleep more peacefully
That thou wert wasting all thy life in woe
For my poor sake; what love thou hast for me,
Bestow it ere I go!

Carve not upon a stone when I am dead
The praises which remorseful mourners give
To women's graves, — a tardy recompense, —
But speak them while I live.

Heap not the heavy marble on my head
To shut away the sunshine and the dew;
Let small blooms grow there, and let grasses wave,
And rain-drops filter through.

Thou wilt meet many fairer and more gay
Than I; but, trust me, thou canst never find
One who will love and serve thee night and day
With a more single mind.

Forget me when I die! The violets
Above my breast will blossom just as blue,
Nor miss thy tears; e'en Nature's self forgets;—
But while I live, be true!

EVERY DAY.

O, TRIFLING tasks so often done,
Yet ever to be done anew!
O, cares which come with every sun,
Morn after morn, the long years through!
We shrink beneath their paltry sway, —
The irksome calls of every day.

The restless sense of wasted power,
The tiresome round of little things,
Are hard to bear, as hour by hour
Its tedious iteration brings;
Who shall evade or who delay
The small demands of every day?

The boulder in the torrent's course
By tide and tempest lashed in vain,
Obeys the wave-whirled pebble's force,
And yields its substance grain by grain;
So crumble strongest lives away
Beneath the wear of every day.

Who finds the lion in his lair,
Who tracks the tiger for his life,
May wound them ere they are aware,
Or conquer them in desperate strife;
Yet powerless he to scathe or slay
The vexing gnats of every day.

The steady strain that never stops
Is mightier than the fiercest shock;
The constant fall of water-drops
Will groove the adamantine rock;
We feel our noblest powers decay,
In feeble wars with every day.

We rise to meet a heavy blow —
Our souls a sudden bravery fills —
But we endure not always so
The drop-by-drop of little ills!
We still deplore and still obey
The hard behests of every day.

The heart which boldly faces death
Upon the battle-field, and dares
Cannon and bayonet, faints beneath
The needle-points of frets and cares;
The stoutest spirits they dismay —
The tiny stings of every day.

And even saints of holy fame,
Whose souls by faith have overcome,
Who wore amid the cruel flame
The molten crown of martyrdom,
Bore not without complaint alway
The petty pains of every day.

Ah! more than martyr's aureole,
And more than hero's heart of fire,
We need the humble strength of soul
Which daily toils and ills require;—
Sweet Patience! grant us, if you may,
An added grace for every day.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

THE TOUCHSTONE.

A MAN there came, whence none could tell,
Bearing a touchstone in his hand;
And tested all things in the land
By its unerring spell.

Quick birth of transmutation smote
The fair to foul, the foul to fair;
Purple nor ermine did he spare,
Nor scorn the dusty coat.

Of heirloom jewels, prized so much,
Were many changed to chips and clods,
And even statues of the gods
Crumbled beneath its touch.

Then angrily the people cried,
"The loss outweighs the profit far;
Our goods suffice us as they are;
We will not have them tried."

And since they could not so avail
To check this unrelenting guest,
They seized him, saying, "Let him test
How real is our jail!"

But, though they slew him with the sword,
And in a fire his touchstone burned,
Its doings could not be o'erturned,
Its undoings restored.

And when, to stop all future harm,
They strewed its ashes on the breeze;
They little guessed each grain of these
Conveyed the perfect charm.

AUTUMNAL SONNET.

Now Autumn's fire burns slowly along the woods,
And day by day the dead leaves fall and melt,
And night by night the monitory blast
Wails in the keyhole, telling how it passed
O'er empty fields, or upland solitudes,
Or grim, wide wave; and now the power is felt
Of melancholy, tenderer in its moods
Than any joy indulgent Summer dealt.
Dear friends, together in the glimmering eve,
Pensive and glad, with tones that recognize
The soft invisible dew in each one's eyes,
It may be, somewhat thus we shall have leave
To walk with Memory, when distant lies
Poor Earth, where we were wont to live and grieve.

WASHINGTON ALLSTON.

BOYHOOD.

Ah, then how sweetly closed those crowded days!
The minutes parting one by one like rays,
That fade upon a summer's eve.
But oh! what charm, or magic numbers
Can give me back the gentle slumbers
Those weary, happy days did leave?
When by my bed I saw my mother kneel,
And with her blessing took her nightly kiss;
Whatever Time destroys, he cannot this —
E'en now that nameless kiss I feel.

◆

THOMAS GOLD APPLETON.

TO ROUSE, THE ARTIST.

As when in watches of the night we see,
Hanging in tremulous beauty o'er the bed,
The face we loved on Earth, now from us fled;
So wan, so sweet, so spiritually free
From taint of Earth, thy tender drawings be.
There we may find a friend rememberèd;
With a new aureole hovering round the head,
Given by Art's peaceful immortality.
How many homes half empty fill the place
Death vacates, with thy gracious substitutes!
Not sensuous with color, which may disgrace
The memory of the body shared with brutes;
But the essential spirit in the face;
As angels see us, best, Affection suits.

TO WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, AFTER THE WAR.

Oh! happiest thou, who from the shining height,
Of tablelands serene can look below
Where glared the tempest, and the lightning's glow,
And see thy seed made harvest wave in light,
And all the darkened land with God's smile bright!
Leaving with him the issue. Enough to know
Albeit the sword hath sundered brothers so,
Yet God's vicegerent ever is the Right.
Nor will he leave us bleeding, but his Time
Which healeth all things will our wounds make whole.
While washed and cleansed of our fraternal crime,
Freedom shall count again her starry roll;
All there, and moving with a step sublime
To music God sounds in the human soul.

EDWIN ARNOLD.

SHE AND HE.

"SHE is dead!" they said to him. "Come away;
Kiss her! and leave her!—thy love is clay!"

They smoothed her tresses of dark brown hair;
On her forehead of marble they laid it fair:

Over her eyes, which gazed too much,
They drew the lids with a gentle touch;

With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell;

About her brows, and her dear, pale face
They tied her veil and her marriage-lace;

And drew on her white feet her white silk shoes;—
Which were the whiter no eye could choose!

And over her bosom they crossed her hands;
"Come away," they said,—"God understands!"

And then there was Silence;—and nothing there
But the Silence—and scents of eglantere,

And jasmine, and roses, and rosemary;
For they said, "As a lady should lie, lies she!"

And they held their breath as they left the room,
With a shudder to glance at its stillness and gloom.

But he—who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead,—

He lit his lamp, and took the key,
And turn'd it!—Alone again—he and she!

He and she; but she would not speak,
Though he kiss'd, in the old place, the quiet cheek;

He and she; yet she would not smile,
Though he call'd her the name that was fondest erewhile.

He and she; and she did not move
To any one passionate whisper of love!

Then he said, "Cold lips! and breast without breath!
Is there no voice?—no language of death

"Dumb to the ear and still to the sense,
But to heart and to soul distinct,—intense?

"See, now,—I listen with soul, not ear—
What was the secret of dying, Dear?

"Was it the infinite wonder of all,
That you ever could let life's flower fall?

"Or was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal?

"Was the miracle greatest to find how deep,
Beyond all dreams, sank downward that sleep?

"Did life roll backward its record, Dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things clear?

"And was it the innermost heart of the bliss
To find out so what a wisdom love is?

"Oh, perfect Dead! oh, Dead most dear,
I hold the breath of my soul to hear;

"I listen — as deep as to horrible hell,
As high as to heaven! — and you do not tell!

"There must be pleasures in dying, Sweet,
To make you so placid from head to feet!

"I would tell *you*, Darling, if I were dead,
And 'twere your hot tears upon *my* brow shed.

"I would say, though the angel of death had laid
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid.

"*You* should not ask, vainly, with streaming eyes,
Which in Death's touch was the chiefest surprise;

"The very strangest and suddenest thing
Of all the surprises that dying must bring."

. . . . .

Ah! foolish world! Oh! most kind Dead!
Though he told me, who will believe it was said?

Who will believe that he heard her say,
With the soft rich voice, in the dear old way: —

"The utmost wonder is this, — I hear,
And see you, and love you, and kiss you, Dear;

"I can speak, now you listen with soul alone;
If your soul could see, it would all be shown.

"What a strange delicious amazement is Death,
To be without body and breathe without breath.

"I should laugh for joy if you did not cry;
Oh, listen! Love lasts! — Love never will die.

"I am only your Angel who was your Bride;
And I know, that though dead, I have never died."

AFTER DEATH IN ARABIA.

He who died at Azan sends
This to comfort all his friends:

Faithful friends! It lies, I know,
Pale and white and cold as snow;
And ye say, "Abdallah's dead!"
Weeping at the feet and head,
I can see your falling tears,
I can hear your sighs and prayers;
Yet I smile and whisper this, —
"*I* am not the thing you kiss;
Cease your tears, and let it lie;
It *was* mine, it is not I."

Sweet friends! What the women lave
For its last bed of the grave,
Is a tent which I am quitting,
Is a garment no more fitting,
Is a cage from which, at last,
Like a hawk my soul hath passed.
Love the inmate, not the room, —
The wearer, not the garb, — the plume
Of the falcon, not the bars
Which kept him from these splendid stars.

Loving friends! Be wise and dry
Straightway every weeping eye, —
What ye lift upon the bier
Is not worth a wistful tear.
'Tis an empty sea-shell, — one
Out of which the pearl is gone;
The shell is broken, it lies there;
The pearl, the all, the soul, is here.

'Tis an earthen jar, whose lid
Allah sealed, the while it hid
That treasure of his treasury,
A mind that loved him; let it lie!
Let the shard be earth's once more,
Since the gold shines in his store!

Allah glorious! Allah good!
Now thy world is understood;
Now the long, long wonder ends;
Yet ye weep, my erring friends,
While the man whom ye call dead,
In unspoken bliss, instead,
Lives and loves you; lost, 'tis true,
By such light as shines for you;
But in light ye cannot see
Of unfulfilled felicity,—
In enlarging paradise,
Lives a life that never dies.

Farewell, friends! Yet not farewell;
Where I am, ye, too, shall dwell.
I am gone before your face,
A moment's time, a little space.
When ye come where I have stepped
Ye will wonder why ye wept;
Ye will know, by wise love taught,
That here is all, and there is naught.
Weep awhile, if ye are fain,—
Sunshine still must follow rain;
Only not at death,—for death,
Now I know, is that first breath
Which our souls draw when we enter
Life, which is of all life centre.

Be ye certain all seems love,
Viewed from Allah's throne above;
Be ye stout of heart, and come
Bravely onward to your home!
La Allah illa Allah! yea!
Thou love divine! Thou love alway!

He that died at Azan gave
This to those who made his grave.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

If on this verse of mine
Those eyes shall ever shine,
Whereto sore-wounded men have looked for life,
Think not that for a rhyme,
Nor yet to fit the time,
I name thy name,—true victor in this strife!
But let it serve to say
That, when we kneel to pray,
Prayers rise for thee thine ear shall never know;
And that thy gallant deed,
For God, and for our need,
Is in all hearts, as deep as love can go.

'Tis good that thy name springs
From two of Earth's fair things—
A stately city and a soft-voiced bird;
'Tis well that in all homes,
When thy sweet story comes,
And brave eyes fill—that pleasant sounds be heard.
Oh voice! in night of fear,
As night's bird, soft to hear,
Oh great heart! raised like city on a hill;
Oh watcher! worn and pale,
Good Florence Nightingale,
Thanks, loving thanks, for thy large work and will!
England is glad of thee—
Christ, for thy charity,
Take thee to joy when hand and heart are still!

GEORGE ARNOLD.

IN THE DARK.

[The author's last poem, written a few days before his death.]

All moveless stand the ancient cedar-trees
Along the drifted sand-hills where they grow;
And from the darkness comes a wandering breeze,
And waves them to and fro.

A murky darkness lies along the sand,
When bright the sunbeams of the morning shone,
And the eye vainly seeks by sea and land
Some light to rest upon.

No large, pale star its glimmering vigil keeps;
An inky sea reflects an inky sky;
And the dark river, like a serpent, creeps
To where its black piers lie.

Strange salty odors through the darkness steal,
And through the dark, the ocean-thunders roll;
Thick darkness gathers, stifling, till I feel
Its weight upon my soul.

I stretch my hands out in the empty air;
I strain my eyes into the heavy night;
Blackness of darkness! — Father, hear my prayer!
Grant me to see the light!

CUI BONO?

A harmless fellow, wasting useless days,
Am I: I love my comfort and my leisure;
Let those who wish them toil for gold and praise;
To me the summer-day brings more of pleasure.

So, here upon the grass, I lie at ease,
While solemn voices from the Past are calling,
Mingled with rustling whispers in the trees,
And pleasant sounds of water idly falling.

There was a time when I had higher aims
Than thus to lie among the flowers and listen
To listening birds, or watch the sunset's flames
On the broad river's surface glow and glisten.

There was a time, perhaps, when I had thought
To make a name, a home, a bright existence:
But time has shown me that my dreams are naught
Save a mirage that vanished with the distance.

Well, it is gone: I care no longer now
For fame, for fortune, or for empty praises;
Rather than wear a crown upon my brow,
I'd lie forever here among the daisies.

So you, who wish for fame, good friend, pass by;
With you I surely cannot think to quarrel:
Give me peace, rest, this bank whereon I lie,
And spare me both the labor and the laurel!

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

YOUTH'S AGITATIONS.

WHEN I shall be divorced, some ten years hence,
From this poor present self which I am now;
When youth has done its tedious vain expense
Of passions that forever ebb and flow;

Shall I not joy youth's heats are left behind,
And breathe more happy in an even clime?—
Ah no, for then I shall begin to find
A thousand virtues in this hated time!

Then I shall wish its agitations back,
And all its thwarting currents of desire;
Then I shall praise the heat which then I lack,
And call this hurrying fever, generous fire;

And sigh that one thing only has been lent
To youth and age in common—discontent.

IMMORTALITY.

FOILED by our fellow-men, depress'd, outworn,
We leave the brutal world to take its way,
And, *Patience! in another life*, we say,
The world shall be thrust down, and we up-borne.

And will not, then, the immortal armies scorn
The world's poor, routed leavings? or will they,
Who fail'd under the heat of this life's day,
Support the fervors of the heavenly morn?

No, no! the energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, but not begun;
And he who flagg'd not in the earthly strife,

From strength to strength advancing only he,
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

EAST LONDON.

'TWAS August, and the fierce sun overhead
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
And the pale weaver, through his windows seen
In Spitalfields, look'd thrice dispirited.

I met a preacher there I knew, and said:
"Ill and o'erwork'd, how fare you in this scene?"—
"Bravely!" said he; "for I of late have been
Much cheer'd with thoughts of Christ, *the living bread.*"

O human soul! as long as thou canst so
Set up a mark of everlasting light,
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,

To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam—
Not with lost toil thou laborest through the night!
Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st indeed thy home.

AUSTERITY OF POETRY.

THAT son of Italy who tried to blow,
Ere Dante came, the trump of sacred song,
In his light youth amid a festal throng
Sate with his bride to see a public show.

Fair was the bride, and on her front did glow
Youth like a star; and what to youth belong —
Gay raiment, sparkling gauds, elation strong.
A prop gave way! crash fell a platform! lo,

Mid struggling sufferers, hurt to death, she lay!
Shuddering, they drew her garments off — and found
A robe of sackcloth next the smooth, white skin.

Such, poets, is your bride, the Muse! young, gay,
Radiant, adorn'd outside; a hidden ground
Of thought and of austerity within.

[*From Memorial Verses.*]

GOETHE.

He took the suffering human race,
He read each wound, each weakness clear;
And struck his finger on the place,
And said: *Thou ailest here, and here!*

EARLY DEATH AND FAME.

FOR him who must see many years,
I praise the life which slips away
Out of the light and mutely; which avoids
Fame, and her less fair followers, envy, strife,
Stupid detraction, jealousy, cabal,
Insincere praises; which descends
The quiet mossy track to age.
But, when immature death
Beckons too early the guest
From the half-tried banquet of life,
Young, in the bloom of his days;
Leaves no leisure to press,
Slow and surely, the sweets
Of a tranquil life in the shade —
Fuller for him be the hours!
Give him emotion, though pain!
Let him live, let him feel: *I have lived.*
Heap up his moments with life!
Triple his pulses with fame!

SELF-DEPENDENCE.

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send:
"Ye who from my childhood up have calm'd me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

"Ah, once more," I cried, "ye stars, ye waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew;
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you!"

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer:
"Wouldst thou *be* as these are? *Live* as they.

"Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

"And with joy the stars perform their shining,
And the sea its long moon-silver'd roll;
For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
All the fever of some differing soul.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see."

O air-born voice! long since, severely clear,
A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear:
"Resolve to be thyself; and know, that he
Who finds himself, loses his misery!"

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

THE TRUE MEASURE OF LIFE.

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breath;
In feelings, not in figures on the dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs when they beat
For God, for man, for duty. He most lives,
Who thinks most, feels noblest, acts the best.
Life is but a means unto an end—that end.
Beginning, mean, and end to all things, God.

JOANNA BAILLIE.

THE WORTH OF FAME.

Oh! who shall lightly say, that Fame
Is nothing but an empty name!
Whilst in that sound there is a charm
The nerves to brace, the heart to warm,
As, thinking of the mighty dead,
The young from slothful couch will start,
And vow, with lifted hands outspread,
Like them to act a noble part?

Oh! who shall lightly say that Fame
Is nothing but an empty name!
When, but for those, our mighty dead,
All ages past a blank would be,
Sunk in oblivion's murky bed,
A desert bare, a shipless sea?
They are the distant objects seen,—
The lofty marks of what hath been.

Oh! who shall lightly say that Fame
Is nothing but an empty name!
When memory of the mighty dead
To earth-worn pilgrim's wistful eye
The brightest rays of cheering shed,
That point to immortality?

THE KITTEN.

Wanton droll, whose harmless play
Beguiles the rustic's closing day,
When drawn the evening fire about,
Sit aged crone and thoughtless lout,
And child upon his three-foot stool,
Waiting till his supper cool;

And maid, whose cheek outblooms the rose,
As bright the blazing fagot glows,
Who, bending to the friendly light
Plies her task with busy sleight;
Come, show thy tricks and sportive graces,
Thus circled round with merry faces.

Backward coil'd, and crouching low,
With glaring eyeballs watch thy foe,
The housewife's spindle whirling round,
Or thread, or straw, that on the ground
Its shadow throws, by urchin sly
Held out to lure thy roving eye;
Then onward stealing, fiercely spring
Upon the futile, faithless thing.
Now, wheeling round, with bootless skill,
Thy bo-peep tail provokes thee still,
As oft beyond thy curving side
Its jetty tip is seen to glide;
Till from thy centre, starting fair,
Thou sidelong rear'st, with rump in air,
Erected stiff, and gait awry,
Like madam in her tantrums high:
Though ne'er a madam of them all,
Whose silken kirtle sweeps the hall
More varied trick and whim displays,
To catch the admiring stranger's gaze . . . .

But not alone by cottage fire
Do rustics rude thy feats admire;
The learnéd sage, whose thoughts explore
The widest range of human lore,
Or, with unfetter'd fancy, fly
Through airy heights of poesy,
Pausing, smiles with alter'd air,
To see thee climb his elbow-chair,
Or, struggling on the mat below,
Hold warfare with his slipper'd toe.
The widow'd dame, or lonely maid,
Who in the still, but cheerless shade
Of home unsocial, spends her age,
And rarely turns a letter'd page;
Upon her hearth for thee lets fall
The rounded cork, or paper ball,
Nor chides thee on thy wicked watch
The ends of ravell'd skein to catch,
But lets thee have thy wayward will,
Perplexing oft her sober skill. . . . .

MY LOVE IS ON HER WAY.

Oh, welcome bat and owlet gray,
Thus winging low your airy way!
And welcome moth and drowsy fly
That to mine ear comes humming by!
And welcome shadows dim and deep,
And stars that through the pale sky peep;
Oh welcome all! to me ye say
My woodland love is on her way.

Upon the soft wind floats her hair,
Her breath is on the dewy air;
Her steps are in the whisper'd sound,
That steals along the stilly ground.
Oh, dawn of day, in rosy bower,
What art thou to this witching hour?
Oh, noon of day, in sunshine bright,
What art thou to this fall of night?

SNATCHES OF MIRTH IN A DARK LIFE.

Didst thou ne'er see the swallow's veering breast,
Winging the air beneath some murky cloud
In the sunned glimpses of a stormy day,
Shiver in silvery brightness?
Or boatman's oar, as vivid lightning flash
In the faint gleam, that like a spirit's path
Tracks the still waters of some sullen lake?
Or lonely tower, from its brown mass of woods,
Give to the parting of a wintry sun
One hasty glance in mockery of the night
Closing in darkness round it? (Gentle friend!
Chide not her mirth who was sad yesterday,
And may be so to-morrow.)

James Ballantine.

ILKA BLADE O' GRASS KEPS ITS AIN DRAP O' DEW.

Confide ye aye in Providence, for Providence is kind,
And bear ye a' life's changes, wi' a calm and tranquil mind,
Though pressed and hemmed on every side, ha'e faith and ye'll win through,
For ilka blade o' grass keps its ain drap o'dew.

Gin reft frae friends or crost in love, as whiles nae doubt ye've been,
Grief lies deep hidden in your heart, or tears flow frae your een,
Believe it for the best, and trow there's good in store for you,
For ilka blade o' grass keps its ain drap o' dew.

In lang, lang days o' simmer, when the clear and cloudless sky
Refuses ae wee drap o' rain to nature parched and dry,
The genial night, wi' balmy breath, gars verdure spring anew,
And ilka blade o' grass keps its ain drap o' dew.

Sae, lest 'mid fortune's sunshine we should feel owre proud and hie,
And in our pride forget to wipe the tear frae poortith's e'e,
Some wee dark clouds o' sorrow come, we ken na whence or hoo,
But ilka blade o' grass keps its ain drap o' dew.

Anna Letitia Barbauld.

LIFE.

Life! I know not what thou art,
But know that thou and I must part;
And when, or how, or where we met,
I own to me 's a secret yet.

. . . . .

Life! we've been long together
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'T is hard to part when friends are dear —
Perhaps 't will cost a sigh, a tear;
— Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not Good Night, — but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good Morning.

THE DEATH OF THE VIRTUOUS.

Sweet is the scene when virtue dies!
When sinks a righteous soul to rest,
How mildly beam the closing eyes,
How gently heaves th' expiring breast.

So fades a summer cloud away
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er,
So gently shuts the eye of day,
So dies a wave along the shore.

Triumphant smiles the victor brow,
Fanned by some angel's purple wing; —
Where is, O Grave! thy victory now!
And where, insidious Death, thy sting!

Farewell, conflicting joys and fears,
Where light and shade alternate dwell!
How bright the unchanging morn appears; —
Farewell, inconstant world, farewell!

Its duty done, — as sinks the day,
Light from its load the spirit flies;
While heaven and earth combine to say
"Sweet is the scene when Virtue dies!"

DAVID BARKER.

THE COVERED BRIDGE.

Tell the fainting soul in the weary form,
There's a world of the purest bliss,
That is linked as the soul and form are linked,
By a covered bridge with this.

Yet to reach that realm on the other shore,
We must pass through a transient gloom,
And must walk unseen, unhelped, and alone
Through that covered bridge — the tomb.

But we all pass over on equal terms,
For the universal toll
Is the outer garb, which the hand of God
Has flung around the soul.

Though the eye is dim and the bridge is dark,
And the river it spans is wide,
Yet Faith points through to a shining mount
That looms on the other side.

To enable our feet on the next day's march
To climb up that golden ridge,
We must all lie down for a one night's rest
Inside of the covered bridge.

JOEL BARLOW.

TO FREEDOM.

Sun of the moral world! effulgent source
Of man's best wisdom and his steadiest force,
Soul-searching Freedom! here assume thy stand,
And radiate hence to every distant land;
Point out and prove how all the scenes of strife,
The shock of states, the impassion'd broils of life,
Spring from unequal sway; and how they fly
Before the splendor of thy peaceful eye;
Unfold at last the genuine social plan,
The mind's full scope, the dignity of man.
Bold nature bursting through her long disguise,
And nations daring to be just and wise.
Yes! righteous Freedom, heaven and earth and sea
Yield or withhold their various gifts for thee;

Protected industry beneath thy reign
Leads all the virtues in her filial train;
Courageous Probity, with brow serene;
And Temperance calm presents her placid mien;
Contentment, Moderation, Labor, Art,
Mould the new man and humanize his heart;
To public plenty, private ease dilates,
Domestic peace, to harmony of states.
Protected Industry, careering far,
Detects the cause, and cures the rage of war,
And sweeps, with forceful arm, to their last graves,
Kings from the earth and pirates from the waves.

Lady Anne Barnard.

AULD ROBIN GRAY.

When the sheep are in the fauld, when the cows come hame,
When a' the weary warld to quiet rest are gane;
The woes of my heart fa' in showers frae my ee,
Unkenned by my gudeman who soundly sleeps by me.

Young Jamie loo'd me weel, and sought me for his bride,
But, saving ae crown piece, he'd naething else beside.
To make the crown a pound, my Jamie gaed to sea;
And the crown and the pound, O they were baith for me!

Before he had been gane a twelvemonth and a day,
My father brak his arm, our cow was stown away;
My mother she fell sick — my Jamie was at sea —
And Auld Robin Gray, O! he came a-courting me.

My father cou'dna work — my mother cou'dna spin;
I toiled day and night, but their bread I cou'dna win;
Auld Rob maintained them baith, and, wi' tears in his ee,
Said, " Jenny, O! for their sakes, will you marry me!"

My heart it said na, and I looked for Jamie back;
But hard blew the winds, and his ship was a wrack;
His ship it was a wrack! Why didna Jamie dee?
Or, wherefore am I spared to cry out, Wae is me!

My father argued sair — my mother didna speak,
But she looked in my face till my heart was like to break;
They gied him my hand, but my heart was in the sea;
And so Auld Robin Gray, he was gudeman to me.

I hadna been his wife, a week but only four,
When, mournfu' as I sat on the stane at my door,
I saw my Jamie's ghaist — I cou'dna think it he,
Till he said, " I'm come hame, my love, to marry thee!"

O sair, sair did we greet, and mickle say of a' ;
Ae kiss we took, na mair — I bade him gang awa.
I wish that I were dead, but I'm nae like to dee;
For O, I am but young to cry out, Wae is me!

I gang like a ghaist, and I carena much to spin,
I darena think of Jamie, for that wad be a sin;
But I will do my best a gude wife aye to be,
For Auld Robin Gray, O! he is sae kind to me.

CHARLOTTE FISKE BATES.

MAKE THINE ANGEL GLAD.

From the morning even until now,
Evil over thee full power hath had;
Oh, remember late the shattered vow!
Turn to God, and make thine angel glad.

Sin will seek to snare thy heart again;
Though her beauty make thee almost mad,
Though resistance make thee pale with pain,
Turn to God, and make thine angel glad.

CONSECRATION.

A LOVER'S MOOD.

All the kisses that I have given,
I grudge from my soul to-day,
And of all I have ever taken,
I would wipe the thought away.

How I wish my lips had been her mits,
Held apart from kith and kin,
That fresh from God's holy service,
To Love's they might enter in.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

The years have linings just as goblets do:
The old year is the lining of the new,—
Filled with the wine of precious memories,
The golden *was* doth line the silver *is*.

WOODBINES IN OCTOBER.

As dyed in blood, the streaming vines appear,
While long and low the wind about them grieves;
The heart of Autumn must have broken here
And poured its treasure out upon the leaves.

TO VICTORIA.

A monarch soul hath ruled thyself, O Queen,
Else what it is, thy kingdom had not been.

FLETCHER BATES.

THE TWO BIRDS.

As leaves turned red
And some fell dead,
For sunnier skies two songsters fled;
But ere they went,
In merriment
They sung how summer had been spent.

One song confest,
"I had my nest
Near yonder mountain's lofty crest;
Where none intrude
In lonely mood
I carolled oft in solitude."

The other sung
"I built among
The cottagers, where old and young
Who trod the vale
Would often hail
Me, as their little nightingale."
Then off they flew,
Like specks they grew,
Then faded in the heavenly blue.
Our human lot
Was theirs, I wot,
For one was missed, and one was not.

THE DEAD BEE.

Where honeysuckles scent the way,
I heard thee humming yesterday;
Thy little life was not in vain,
It gathered sweets for other's gain,
And somewhere in a dainty cell
Is stored delicious hydromel.

O poet! in thy calm retreat,
From joy and grief extracting sweet,
Some day thy fancy's wings must fold,
And thou lie motionless and cold.
Perhaps thy garnered honey then
May be the food of living men.

KATHARINE LEE BATES.

THE ORGANIST.

Slowly I circle the dim, dizzy stair,
Wrapt in my cloak's gray fold,
Holding my heart lest it throb to the air
Its radiant secret, for though I be old,
Though I totter and rock like a ship in the wind,
And the sunbeams come unto me broken and blind,
Yet my spirit drinks youth from the treasure we hold,
Richer than gold.

Princes below me, lips wet from the wine,
Hush at my organ's swell;
Ladies applaud me with clappings as fine
As showers that splash in a musical well.
But their ears only hear mighty melodies ringing,
And their souls never know 'tis my angel there singing,
That the grand organ-angel awakes in his cell
Under my spell.

There in the midst of the wandering pipes,
Far from the gleaming keys,
And the organ-front with its gilded stripes,
My glorious angel lies sleeping at ease.
And the hand of a stranger may beat at his gate,
And the ear of a stranger may listen and wait,
But he only cries in his pain for these,
Witless to please.

Angel, my angel, the old man's hand
 Knoweth thy silver way.
I loose thy lips from their silence-band
 And over thy heart-strings my fingers play,
While the song peals forth from thy mellow throat,
And my spirit climbs on the climbing note,
 Till I mingle thy tone with the tones away
  Over the day.

So I look up as I follow the tone,
 Up with my dim old eyes,
And I wonder if organs have angels alone,
 Or if, as my fancy might almost surmise,
Each man in his heart folds an angel with wings,
An angel that slumbers, but wakens and sings
 When thrilled by the touch that is sympathy-wise,
  Bidding it rise.

THOMAS HAYNES BAYLY.

THE FIRST GRAY HAIR.

THE matron at her mirror,
 With her hand upon her brow,
Sits gazing on her lovely face,—
 Ay, lovely even now!
Why doth she lean upon her hand
 With such a look of care?
Why steals that tear across her cheek?
 She sees her first gray hair!

Time from her form hath ta'en away
 But little of its grace;
His touch of thought hath dignified
 The beauty of her face.
Yet she might mingle in the dance
 Where maidens gayly trip,
So bright is still her hazel eye,
 So beautiful her lip.

The faded form is often mark'd
 By sorrow more than years,—
The wrinkle on the cheek may be
 The course of secret tears;
The mournful lip may murmur of
 A love it ne'er confess'd,
And the dimness of the eye betray
 A heart that cannot rest.

But she hath been a happy wife:
 The lover of her youth
May proudly claim the smile that pays
 The trial of his truth;
A sense of slight — of loneliness
 Hath never banish'd sleep:
Her life hath been a cloudless one;
 Then wherefore doth she weep?

She look'd upon her raven locks,—
 What thoughts did they recall?
Oh! not of nights when they were deck'd
 For banquet or for ball;
They brought back thoughts of early youth,
 Ere she had learn'd to check,
With artificial wreaths, the curls
 That sported o'er her neck.

She seem'd to feel her mother's hand
 Pass lightly through her hair,
And draw it from her brow, to leave
 A kiss of kindness there.
She seem'd to view her father's smile,
 And feel the playful touch
That sometimes feign'd to steal away
 The curls she prized so much.

And now she sees her first gray hair!
 Oh, deem it not a crime
For her to weep, when she beholds
 The first footmark of Time!
She knows that, one by one, those mute
 Mementos will increase,
And steal youth, beauty, strength away,
 Till life itself shall cease.

. . . . .

Ah, lady! heed the monitor!
Thy mirror tells thee truth;
Assume the matron's folded veil,
Resign the wreath of youth:

Go! bind it on thy daughter's brow,
In her thou'lt still look fair—
'Twere well would all learn wisdom, who
Behold the first gray hair!

JAMES BEATTIE.

[*From The Minstrel.*]

THE ASCENT TO FAME.

Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar?
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Has felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war?
Checked by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pined alone,
Then dropped into the grave, unpitied and unknown!

[*From The Minstrel.*]

THE CHARMS OF NATURE.

Oh, how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields!
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven,
Oh, how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven?

[*From The Minstrel.*]

BEAUTIES OF MORNING.

But who the melodies of morn can tell?
The wild brook babbling down the mountain side;
The lowing herd; the sheepfold's simple bell;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above;
The hollow murmur of the ocean-tide;
The hum of bees, the linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove.

The cottage-curs at early pilgrim bark;
Crowned with her pail the tripping milkmaid sings;
The whistling ploughman stalks afield; and, hark!
Down the rough slope the ponderous wagon rings;
Through rustling corn the hare astonished springs;
Slow tolls the village-clock the drowsy hour;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequestered bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aerial tower.

[*From The Minstrel.*]

DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

WHERE now the rill, melodious, pure, and cool,
And meads, with life, and mirth, and beauty crowned?
Ah! see, the unsightly slime, and sluggish pool,
Have all the solitary vale embrowned;
Fled each fair form, and mute each melting sound,
The raven croaks forlorn on naked spray.
And hark! the river bursting every mound,
Down the vale thunders, and with wasteful sway
Uproots the grove, and rolls the shattered rocks away.

Yet such the destiny of all on earth:
So flourishes and fades majestic man.
Fair is the bud his vernal morn brings forth,
And fostering gales a while the nursling fan.
O smile, ye heavens, serene; ye mildews wan,
Ye blighting whirlwinds, spare his balmy prime,
Nor lessen of his life the little span.
Borne on the swift, though silent wings of Time,
Old age comes on apace to ravage all the clime.
And be it so. Let those deplore their doom
Whose hope still grovels in this dark sojourn;
But lofty souls, who look beyond the tomb,
Can smile at Fate, and wonder how they mourn.
Shall Spring to these sad scenes no more return?
Is yonder wave the Sun's eternal bed?
Soon shall the orient with new lust'e burn,
And Spring shall soon her vital influence shed,
Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead.

Shall I be left forgotten in the dust,
When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive?
Shall Nature's voice, to man alone unjust,
Bid him, though doomed to perish, hope to live?
Is it for this fair Virtue oft must strive
With disappointment, penury, and pain?
No: Heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive,
And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
Bright through the eternal year of Love's triumphant reign.

ETHEL LYNN BEERS.

THE PICKET-GUARD.

"ALL quiet along the Potomac," they say,
"Except, now and then, a stray picket
Is shot as he walks on his beat to and fro,
By a rifleman hid in the thicket.
'Tis nothing — a private or two, now and then,
Will not count in the news of the battle;
Not an officer lost — only one of the men
Moaning out, all alone, the death-rattle."

. . . . . .

All quiet along the Potomac to-night,
Where the soldiers lie peacefully dreaming;
Their tents, in the rays of the clear autumn moon
Or the light of the watch-fires, are gleaming.
A tremulous sigh, as the gentle night-wind
Through the forest-leaves softly is creeping;
While the stars up above, with their glittering eyes,
Keep guard — for the army is sleeping.

There's only the sound of the lone sentry's tread
As he tramps from the rock to the fountain,
And thinks of the two in the low trundle-bed,
Far away in the cot on the mountain.
His musket falls slack — his face, dark and grim,
Grows gentle with memories tender,
As he mutters a prayer for the children asleep —
For their mother — may Heaven defend her!

The moon seems to shine just as brightly as then,
That night when the love yet unspoken,
Leaped up to his lips — when low-murmured vows
Were pledged to be ever unbroken.
Then drawing his sleeve roughly over his eyes,
He dashes off tears that are welling,
And gathers his gun closer up to its place,
As if to keep down the heart-swelling.

He passes the fountain, the blasted pine-tree,
The footstep is lagging and weary;
Yet onward he goes through the broad belt of light,
Toward the shade of the forest so dreary.
Hark! was it the night wind that rustled the leaves?
Was it moonlight so wondrously flashing?
It looked like a rifle — "Ah! Mary, good-by!"
And the life-blood is ebbing and plashing.

All quiet along the Potomac to-night,
No sound save the rush of the river;
While soft falls the dew on the face of the dead —
The picket's off duty forever!

WEIGHING THE BABY.

"How many pounds does the baby weigh —
Baby who came but a month ago?
How many pounds from the crowning curl
To the rosy point of the restless toe?"

Grandfather ties the 'kerchief knot,
Tenderly guides the swinging weight,
And carefully over his glasses peers
To read the record, "only eight."

Softly the echo goes around:
The father laughs at the tiny girl;
The fair young mother sings the words,
While grandmother smooths the golden curl.

And stooping above the precious thing,
Nestles a kiss within a prayer,
Murmuring softly "Little one,
Grandfather did not weigh you fair."

Nobody weighed the baby's smile,
Or the love that came with the helpless one;
Nobody weighed the threads of care,
From which a woman's life is spun.

No index tells the mighty worth
Of a little baby's quiet breath—
A soft, unceasing metronome,
Patient and faithful until death.

Nobody weighed the baby's soul,
For here on earth no weights there be
That could avail; God only knows
Its value in eternity.

Only eight pounds to hold a soul
That seeks no angel's silver wing,
But shrines it in this human guise,
Within so frail and small a thing!

Oh, mother! laugh your merry note,
Be gay and glad, but do n't forget
From baby's eyes looks out a soul
That claims a home in Eden yet.

Francis Beaumont.

ON THE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

MORTALITY, behold and fear
What a change of flesh is here!
Think how many royal bones
Sleep within these heaps of stones:
Here they lie, had realms and lands,
Who now want strength to stir their hands,
Where from their pulpits seal'd with dust
They preach, "In greatness is no trust."
Here's an acre sown indeed
With the richest royallest seed
That the earth did e'er suck in
Since the first man died for sin:
Here the bones of birth have cried
"Though gods they were, as men they died!"
Here are sands, ignoble things,
Dropt from the ruin'd sides of kings:
Here's a world of pomp and state
Buried in dust, once dead by fate.

William Cox Bennett.

THE SEASONS.

A BLUE-EYED child that sits amid the noon,
O'erhung with a laburnum's drooping sprays,
Singing her little songs, while softly round
Along the grass the chequered sunshine plays.

All beauty that is throned in womanhood
Pacing a summer garden's fountained walks,
That stoops to smooth a glossy spaniel down
To hide her flushing cheek from one who talks.

A happy mother with her fair-faced girls,
In whose sweet spring again her youth she sees,
With shout and dance and laugh and bound and song,
Stripping in autumn orchards, laden trees.

An aged woman in a wintry room —
Frost on the pane, without the whirling snow —
Reading old letters of her far-off youth,
Of sorrows past and joys of long ago.

SUMMER RAIN.

O GENTLE, gentle summer rain,
Let not the silver lily pine,
The drooping lily pine in vain
To feel that dewy touch of thine,
To drink thy freshness once again,
O gentle, gentle summer rain!

In heat, the landscape quivering lies;
The cattle pant beneath the tree;
Through parching air and purple skies
The earth looks up in vain for thee:
For thee, for thee it looks in vain,
O gentle, gentle summer rain!

Come thou, and brim the meadow streams,
And soften all the hills with mist;
O falling dew from burning dreams,
By thee shall herb and flower be kissed:
And earth shall bless thee yet again,
O gentle, gentle summer rain!

JAMES BERRY BENSEL.

IN ARABIA.

"CHOOSE thou between!" and to his enemy
The Arab chief a brawny hand displayed.
Wherein, like moonlight on a sullen sea,
Gleamed the gray scimetar's engraven blade.

"Choose thou between death at my hand and thine!
Close in my power my vengeance I may wreak;
Yet hesitate to strike. A hate like mine
Is noble still. Thou hast thy choosing — speak!"

And Ackbar stood. About him all the band
That hailed his captor chieftain, with grave eyes,
His answer waited, while that heavy hand
Stretched like a bar between him and the skies.

Straight in the face before him Ackbar sent
A sneer of scorn, and raised his noble head;
"Strike!" and the desert monarch, as content,
Rehung the weapon at his girdle red.

Then Ackbar nearer crept and lifted high
His arms toward the heaven so far and blue,
Wherein the sunset rays began to die,—
While o'er the band a deeper silence grew.

"Strike! I am ready! Didst thou think to see
A son of Ghera spill upon the dust
His noble blood? Didst hope to have my knee
Bend at thy feet, and with one mighty thrust

"The life thou hatest flee before thee here?
Shame on thee! on thy race! art thou the one
Who hast so long thy vengeance counted dear?
My hate is greater; I did strike thy son,

"Thy one son, Noumid, dead before my face:
And by the swiftest courser of my stud
Sent to thy door his corpse. Aye, one might trace
Their flight across the desert by his blood.

"Strike! for my hate is greater than thy own!"
But with a frown the Arab moved away,
Walked to a distant palm and stood alone,
With eyes that looked where purple mountains lay.

This for an instant: then he turned again
Toward the place where Ackbar waited still,
Walking as one benumbed with bitter pain,
Or with a hateful mission to fulfil.

"Strike, for I hate thee!" Ackbar cried once more.
"Nay, but my hate I cannot find!" said now
His enemy. "Thy freedom I restore.
Live; life were more than death to such as thou."

So with his gift of life the Bedouin slept
That night untroubled; but when dawn broke through
The purple East, and o'er his eyelids crept
The long, thin fingers of the light, he drew

A heavy breath and woke: above him shone
A lifted dagger — "Yea, he gave thee life,
But I give death!" came in fierce undertone.
And Ackbar died. It was dead Noumid's wife.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

THE TIGER.

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burned the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thine heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand forged thy dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile his work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

SUSANNA BLAMIRE.

WHAT AILS THIS HEART O' MINE.

WHAT ails this heart o' mine?
  What ails this watery ee?
What gars me a' turn pale as death
  When I take leave o' thee?
When thou art far awa',
  Thou 'lt dearer grow to me;
But change o' place and change o' folk
  May gar thy fancy jee.

When I gae out at e'en,
  Or walk at morning air,
Ilk rustling bush will seem to say.
  I used to meet thee there.
Then I'll sit down and cry,
  And live aneath the tree,
And when a leaf fa's i' my lap,
  I 'll ca' 't a word frae thee.

I 'll hie me to the bower
  That thou wi' roses tied,
And where wi' mony a blushing bud
  I strove myself to hide.
I 'll doat on ilka spot
  Where I ha'e been wi' thee;
And ca' to mind some kindly word,
  By ilka burn and tree.

◆

ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

[*From The Farmer's Boy.*]

A SPRING DAY.

ADVANCING Spring profusely spreads abroad
Flowers of all hues, with sweetest fragrance stored;
Where'er she treads Love gladdens every plain,
Delight on tiptoe bears her lucid train;
Sweet Hope with conscious brow before her flies,
Anticipating wealth from Summer skies;
All Nature feels her renovating sway;
The sheep-fed pasture, and the meadow gay;
And trees, and shrubs, no longer budding seen,
Display the new-grown branch of lighter green;
On airy downs the idling shepherd lies,
And sees to-morrow in the marbled skies.

[*From The Farmer's Boy.*]

A TEMPEST.

ANON tired laborers bless their sheltering home,
When midnight, and the frightful tempest come.
The farmer wakes, and sees, with silent dread,
The angry shafts of Heaven gleam round his bed;
The bursting cloud reiterated roars,
Shakes his straw roof, and jars his bolted doors:
The slow-winged storm along the troubled skies
Spreads its dark course: the wind begins to rise;
And full-leafed elms, his dwelling's shade by day,
With mimic thunder give its fury way:
Sounds in the chimney-top a doleful peal
Midst pouring rain, or gusts of rattling hail;

With tenfold danger low the tempest bends,
And quick and strong the sulphurous flame descends:
The frightened mastiff from his kennel flies,
And cringes at the door with piteous cries. . . .

Where now's the trifler! where the child of pride?
These are the moments when the heart is tried!
Nor lives the man, with conscience e'er so clear,
But feels a solemn, reverential fear;
Feels too a joy relieve his aching breast,
When the spent storm hath howled itself to rest.
Still, welcome beats the long-continued shower,
And sleep protracted, comes with double power;
Calm dreams of bliss bring on the morning sun,
For every barn is filled, and Harvest done!

[*From The Farmer's Boy.*]

HARVESTING.

Hark! where the sweeping scythe now rips along:
Each sturdy mower, emulous and strong,
Whose writhing form meridian heat defies,
Bends o'er his work, and every sinew tries;
Prostrates the waving treasure at his feet,
But spares the rising clover, short and sweet.
Come, Health! come, Jollity! light-footed, come;
Here hold your revels, and make this your home.
Each heart awaits and hails you as its own;
Each moistened brow, that scorns to wear a frown:
The unpeopled dwelling mourns its tenants strayed;
E'en the domestic laughing dairy-maid
Hies to the field, the general toil to share.
Meanwhile the farmer quits his elbow-chair,
His cool brick floor, his pitcher, and his ease,
And braves the sultry beams, and gladly sees
His gates thrown open, and his team abroad,
The ready group attendant on his word,
To turn the swarth, the quivering load to rear,
Or ply the busy rake, the land to clear.
Summer's light garb itself now cumbrous grown,
Each his thin doublet in the shade throws down;
Where oft the mastiff skulks with half-shut eye,
And rouses at the stranger passing by:
Whilst unrestrained the social converse flows,
And every breast Love's powerful impulse knows,
And rival wits with more than rustic grace
Confess the presence of a pretty face.

For, lo! encircled there, the lovely maid,
In youth's own bloom and native smiles arrayed;
Her hat awry, divested of her gown,
Her creaking stays of leather, stout and brown;—
Invidious barrier! Why art thou so high,
When the slight covering of her neck slips by,
There half revealing to the eager sight,
Her full, ripe bosom, exquisitely white?

In many a local tale of harmless mirth,
And many a jest of momentary birth,
She bears a part, and as she stops to speak,
Strokes back the ringlets from her glowing cheek.

TO HIS MOTHER'S SPINDLE.

The hand that wore thee smooth is cold, and spins
No more! Debility pressed hard, around
The seat of life, and terrors filled her brain, —
Nor causeless terrors. Giants grim and bold,
Three mighty ones she feared to meet: — they came —
Winter, Old Age, and Poverty, — all came;

. . . . .

And when Death beheld
Her tribulation, he fulfilled his task,
And to her trembling hand and heart at once,
Cried, "*Spin no more.*" — Thou then wert left half filled
With this soft downy fleece, such as she wound
Through all her days, she who could spin so well.
Half filled wert thou — half finished when she died!
— Half finished? 'Tis the motto of the world!
We spin vain threads, and strive, and die
With sillier things than spindles on our hands!

Then feeling, as I do, resistlessly,
The bias set upon my soul for verse;
Oh, should old age still find my brain at work,
And Death, o'er some poor fragment striding, cry
"Hold! spin no more!" grant, Heaven, that purity
Of thought and texture, may assimilate
That fragment unto thee, in usefulness,
In worth, and snowy innocence. Then shall
The village school-mistress, shine brighter through
The exit of her boy; and both shall live,
And virtue triumph too; and virtue's tears,
Like Heaven's pure blessings, fall upon their grave.

LOVE OF THE COUNTRY.

[Written at Clare Hall, Herts, June, 1804.]

Welcome, silence! welcome, peace!
Oh, most welcome, holy shade!
Thus I prove, as years increase,
My heart and soul for quiet made.
Thus I fix my firm belief
While rapture's rushing tears descend,
That every flower and every leaf
Is moral Truth's unerring friend.

I would not for a world of gold
That Nature's lovely face should tire;
Fountain of blessings yet untold:
Pure source of intellectual fire!
Fancy's fair buds, the germs of song,
Unquickened midst the world's rude strife,
Shall sweet retirement render strong,
And morning silence bring to life.

Then tell me not that I shall grow
Forlorn, that fields and woods will cloy;
From Nature and her changes flow
An everlasting tide of joy.
I grant that summer heats will burn,
That keen will come the frosty night;
But both shall please: and each in turn
Yield Reason's most supreme delight.

Build me a shrine, and I could kneel
To rural gods, or prostrate fall;
Did I not see, did I not feel,
That one GREAT SPIRIT governs all.
O Heaven, permit that I may lie
Where o'er my corse green branches wave;
And those who from life's tumult fly
With kindred feelings, press my grave.

GLEANER'S SONG.

DEAR Ellen, your tales are all plenteously stored
With the joys of some bride, and the wealth of her lord;
Of her chariots and dresses,
And worldly caresses,
And servants that fly when she's waited upon:
But what can she boast if she weds unbeloved?
Can she e'er feel the joy that one morning I proved,
When I put on my new gown and waited for John?

These fields, my dear Ellen, I knew them of yore,
Yet to me they ne'er look'd so enchanting before;
The distant bells ringing,
The birds round us singing,
For pleasure is pure when affection is won:
They told me the troubles and cares of a wife;
But I loved him; and that was the pride of my life,
When I put on my new gown and waited for John.

He shouted and ran, as he leapt from the stile;
And what in my bosom was passing the while?
For love knows the blessing
Of ardent caressing,
When virtue inspires us, and doubts are all gone.
The sunshine of Fortune you say is divine;
True love and the sunshine of Nature were mine,
When I put on my new gown and waited for John.

GEORGE HENRY BOKER.

ODE TO A MOUNTAIN OAK.

PROUD mountain giant, whose majestic face,
From thy high watch-tower on the steadfast rock,
Looks calmly o'er the trees that throng thy base,
How long hast thou withstood the tempest's shock?
How long hast thou looked down on yonder vale
Sleeping in sun before thee;
Or bent thy ruffled brow, to let the gale
Steer its white, drifting sails just o'er thee?

Strong link 'twixt vanished ages!
Thou hast a sage and reverend look;
As if life's struggle, through its varied stages,
Were stamped on thee, as in a book.

Thou hast no voice to tell what thou hast seen,
Save a low moaning in thy troubled leaves;
And canst but point thy scars, and shake thy head,
With solemn warning, in the sunbeam's sheen;
And show how Time the mightiest thing bereaves,
By the sere leaves that rot upon thy bed.

Type of long-suffering power!
Even in my gayest hour,
Thou 'dst still my tongue, and send my spirit far,
To wander in a labyrinth of thought;
For thou hast waged with Time unceasing war,
And out of pain hast strength and beauty brought.
Thou amidst storms and tempests hadst thy birth,
Upon these bleak and scantly-sheltering rocks,
Nor much save storm and wrath hast known on earth;
Yet nobly hast thou bode the fiercest shocks.
That Circumstance can pour on patient Worth.

I see thee springing, in the vernal time,
A sapling weak, from out the barren stone,
To dance with May upon the mountain peak;
Pale leaves put forth to greet the genial clime,
And roots shot down life's sustenance to seek,
While mere existence was a joy alone —
O thou wert happy then!
On summer's heat thy tinkling leaflets fed,
Each fibre toughened, and a little crown
Of green upon thy modest brow was spread,
To catch the rain, and shake it gently down.
But then came autumn, when
Thy dry and tattered leaves fell dead;
And sadly on the gale
Thou drop'dst them one by one —
Drop'dst them, with a low, sad wail,
On the cold, unfeeling stone.
Next Winter seized thee in his iron grasp,
And shook thy bruised and straining form;
Or locked thee in his icicle's cold clasp,
And piled upon thy head the shorn cloud's snowy fleece.
Wert thou not joyful, in this bitter storm,
That the green honors, which erst decked thy head,
Sage Autumn's slow decay, had mildly shed?
Else, with their weight, they'd given thy ills increase,
And dragged thee helpless from thy uptorn bed.

Year after year, in kind or adverse fate,
Thy branches stretched, and thy young twigs put forth,
Nor changed thy nature with the season's date:
Whether thou wrestled'st with the gusty north,
Or beat the driving rain to glittering froth,
Or shook the snow-storm from thy arms of might,
Or drank the balmy dews on summer's night; —
Laughing in sunshine, writhing in the storm,
Yet wert thou still the same!
Summer spread forth thy towering form,
And Winter strengthened thy great frame.
Achieving thy destiny
On went'st thou sturdily,
Shaking thy green flags in triumph and jubilee!

From thy secure and sheltering branch
The wild bird pours her glad and fearless lay,
That, with the sunbeams, falls upon the vale,
Adding fresh brightness to the smile of day,
'Neath those broad boughs the youth has told love's tale;
And thou hast seen his hardy features blanch,
Heard his snared heart beat like a prisoned bird,
Fluttering with fear, before the fowler laid;
While his bold figure shook at every word —
The strong man trembling at a timid maid!
And thou hast smiled upon their children's play:
Seen them grow old, and gray, and pass away.

Heard the low prattle of the thoughtless child,
Age's cold wisdom, and the lessons mild
Which patient mothers to their offspring say: —
Yet art thou still the same!
Man may decay;
Race after race may pass away;
The great may perish, and their very fame
Rot day by day —
Rot noteless with their once inspired clay:
Still, as at their birth,
Thou stretchest thy long arms above the earth —
Type of unbending Will!
Type of majestic, self-sustaining Power!
Elate in sunshine, firm when tempests lower,
May thy calm strength my wavering spirit fill!
O let me learn from thee,
Thou proud and steadfast tree,
To bear unmurmuring what stern Time may send;
Nor 'neath life's ruthless tempests bend:
But calmly stand like thee,
Though wrath and storm shake me,
Though vernal hopes in yellow Autumn end,
And strong in truth work out my destiny.
Type of long-suffering Power!
Type of unbending Will!
Strong in the tempest's hour,
Bright when the storm is still;
Rising from every contest with an unbroken heart,
Strengthened by every struggle, emblem of might thou art!
Sign of what man can compass, spite of an adverse state,
Still, from thy rocky summit, teach us to war with fate!

AWAKING OF THE POETICAL FACULTY.

ALL day I heard a humming in my ears,
A buzz of many voices, and a throng
Of swarming numbers, passing with a song
Measured and stately as the rolling spheres'.
I saw the sudden light of lifted spears,
Slanted at once against some monster wrong;
And then a fluttering scarf which might belong
To some sweet maiden in her morn of years.
I felt the chilling damp of sunless glades,
Horrid with gloom; anon, the breath of May
Was blown around me, and the lulling play
Of dripping fountains. Yet the lights and shades,
The waving scarfs, the battle's grand parades,
Seemed but vague shadows of that wondrous lay.

TO ENGLAND.

Stand, thou great bulwark of man's liberty!
Thou rock of shelter rising from the wave,
Sole refuge to the overwearied brave
Who planned, arose, and battled to be free,
Fell undeterred, then sadly turned to thee;—
Saved the free spirit from their country's grave,
To rise again, and animate the slave,
When God shall ripen all things. Britons, ye
Who guard the sacred outpost, not in vain
Hold your proud peril! Freemen undefiled,
Keep watch and ward! Let battlements be piled
Around your cliffs; fleets marshalled, till the main
Sink under them; and if your courage wane,
Through force or fraud, look westward to your child!

LOVE SONNETS.

How canst thou call my modest love impure,
Being thyself the holy source of all?
Can ugly darkness from the fair sun fall?
Or nature's compact be so insecure,
That saucy weeds may sprout up and endure
Where gentle flowers were sown? The brooks that crawl,
With lazy whispers, through the lilies tall,
Or rattle o'er the pebbles, will allure
With no feigned sweetness, if their fount be sweet.
So thou, the sun whence all my light doth flow—
Thou, sovereign law by which my fancies grow—
Thou, fount of every feeling, slow or fleet—
Against thyself would'st aim a treacherous blow,
Slaying thy honor with thy own conceit.

Why shall I chide the hand of wilful Time
When he assaults thy wondrous store of charms?
Why charge the gray-beard with a wanton crime?
Or strive to daunt him with my shrill alarms?
Or seek to lull him with a silly rhyme:
So he, forgetful, pause upon his arms,
And leave thy beauties in their noble prime,
The sole survivors of his grievous harms?
Alas! my love, though I'll indeed bemoan
The fatal ruin of thy majesty;
Yet I'll remember that to Time alone
I owed thy birth, thy charms' maturity,
Thy crowning love, with which he vested me,
Nor can reclaim, though all the rest be flown.

In this deep hush and quiet of my soul,
When life runs low, and all my senses stay
Their daily riot; when my wearied clay
Resigns its functions, and, without control
Of selfish passion, my essential whole
Rises in purity, to make survey
Of those poor deeds that wear my days away;
When in my ear I hear the distant toll
Of bells that murmur of my coming knell,

And all things seem a show and mockery—
Life, and life's actions, noise and vanity;
I ask my mournful heart if it can tell
If all be truth which I protest to thee:
And my heart answers, solemnly, "'Tis well."

I HAVE been mounted on life's topmost wave,
Until my forehead kissed the dazzling cloud;
I have been dashed beneath the murky shroud
That yawns between the watery crests. I rave,
Sometimes, like cursed Orestes; sometimes lave
My limbs in dews of asphodel; or, bowed
With torrid heat, I moan to heaven aloud,
Or shrink with Winter in his icy cave.
Now peace broods over me; now savage rage
Spurns me across the world. Nor am I free
From nightly visions, when the pictured page
Of sleep unfolds its varied leaves to me,
Changing as often as the mimic stage;—
And all this, lady, through my love for thee!

SOMETIMES, in bitter fancy, I bewail
This spell of love, and wish the cause removed;
Wish I had never seen, or, seeing, not loved
So utterly that passion should prevail
O'er self-regard, and thoughts of thee assail
Those inmost barriers which so long have proved
Unconquerable, when such defence behoved.
But, ah! my treacherous heart doth ever fail
To ratify the sentence of my mind;
For when conviction strikes me to the core,
I swear I love thee fondlier than before;
And were I now all free and unconfined,
Loose as the action of the shoreless wind,
My slavish heart would sigh for bonds once more.

AH! let me live on memories of old,—
The precious relics I have set aside
From life's poor venture; things that yet abide
My ill-paid labor, shining, like pure gold,
Amid the dross of cheated hopes whose hold
Dropped at the touch of action. Let me glide
Down the smooth past, review that day of pride
When each to each our mutual passion told—
When love grew frenzy in thy blazing eye,
Fear shone heroic, caution quailed before
My hot, resistless kisses—when we bore
Time, conscience, destiny, down, down for aye,
Beneath victorious love, and thou didst cry,
"Strike, God! life's cup is running o'er and o'er"

DIRGE FOR A SOLDIER.

CLOSE his eyes; his work is done!
What to him is friend or foeman,
Rise of moon, or set of sun,
Hand of man, or kiss of woman?
Lay him low, lay him low,
In the clover or the snow!
What cares he? he cannot know:
Lay him low!

As man may, he fought his fight,
  Proved his truth by his endeavor;
Let him sleep in solemn night,
  Sleep forever, and forever.
    Lay him low, lay him low,
    In the clover or the snow!
    What cares he? he cannot know:
      Lay him low!

Fold him in his country's stars,
  Roll the drum and fire the volley!
What to him are all our wars,
  What but death-bemocking folly?
    Lay him low, lay him low,
    In the clover or the snow!
    What cares he? he cannot know
      Lay him low!

Leave him to God's watching eye,
  Trust him to the hand that made him.
Mortal love weeps idly by:
  God alone has power to aid him.
    Lay him low, lay him low,
    In the clover or the snow!
    What cares he? he cannot know:
      Lay him low!

HORATIUS BONAR.

A LITTLE WHILE.

Beyond the smiling and the weeping
    I shall be soon;
Beyond the waking and the sleeping,
Beyond the sowing and the reaping,
    I shall be soon.
  Love, rest, and home!
  Sweet hope!
  Lord, tarry not, but come.

Beyond the blooming and the fading
    I shall be soon;
Beyond the shining and the shading,
Beyond the hoping and the dreading,
    I shall be soon,
  Love, rest, and home!
  Sweet hope!
  Lord, tarry not, but come.

Beyond the rising and the setting
    I shall be soon.
Beyond the calming and the fretting,
Beyond remembering and forgetting,
    I shall be soon.
  Love, rest, and home!
  Sweet hope!
  Lord, tarry not, but come.

Beyond the gathering and the strowing
    I shall be soon;
Beyond the ebbing and the flowing,
Beyond the coming and the going,
    I shall be soon.
  Love, rest, and home!
  Sweet hope!
  Lord, tarry not, but come.

Beyond the parting and the meeting
    I shall be soon;
Beyond the farewell and the greeting,
Beyond this pulse's fever-beating,
    I shall be soon.
  Love, rest, and home!
  Sweet hope!
  Lord, tarry not, but come.

Beyond the frost-chain and the fever
    I shall be soon;
Beyond the rock-waste and the river,
Beyond the ever and the never,
    I shall be soon.
  Love, rest, and home!
  Sweet hope!
  Lord, tarry not, but come.

THE INNER CALM.

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
  While these hot breezes blow;
Be like the night-dew's cooling balm
  Upon earth's fevered brow.

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
  Soft resting on thy breast;
Soothe me with holy hymn and psalm
  And bid my spirit rest.

Calm me, my God, and keep me calm,
Let thine outstretchèd wing
Be like the shade of Elim's palm
Beside her desert spring.

Yes, keep me calm, though loud and rude.
The sounds my ear that greet,
Calm in the closet's solitude,
Calm in the bustling street;

Calm in the hour of buoyant health,
Calm in my hour of pain,
Calm in my poverty or wealth,
Calm in my loss or gain;

Calm in the sufferance of wrong,
Like Him who bore my shame,
Calm mid the threatening, taunting throng,
Who hate thy holy name;

Calm when the great world's news with power
My listening spirit stir;
Let not the tidings of the hour
E'er find too fond an ear;

Calm as the ray of sun or star
Which storms assail in vain,
Moving unruffled through earth's war,
The eternal calm to gain.

HELEN BARRON BOSTWICK.

URVASI.

'Tis a story told by Kalidasa,—
Hindoo poet—in melodious rhyme,
How with train of maidens, young Urvasi
Came to keep great Indra's festal time.

'Twas her part in worshipful confession
Of the god-name on that sacred day,
Walking flower-crowned in the long procession,
"I love Pura-shotta-ma" to say.

Pure as snow on Himalayan ranges,
Heaven-descended, soon to heaven withdrawn,
Fairer than the moon-flower of the Ganges,
Was Urvasi, Daughter of the Dawn.

But it happened that the gentle maiden
Loved one Puru-avas, — fateful name! —
And her heart, with its sweet secret laden,
Faltered when her time of utterance came.

"I love" — then she stopped, and people wondered;
"I love" — she must guard her secret well;
Then from sweetest lips that ever blundered,
"I love Puru-avas," trembling fell.

Ah, what terror seized on poor Urvasi!
Misty grew the violets of her eyes,
And her form bent like a broken daisy
While around her rose the mocking cries.

But great Indra said, "The maid shall marry
Him whose image in her faithful heart
She so near to that of God doth carry,
Scarce her lips can keep their names apart."

Call it then not weakness or dissembling
If, in striving the high name to reach,
Through our voices runs the tender trembling
Of an earthly name too dear for speech!

Ever dwells the lesser in the greater;
In God's love the human: we by these
Know he holds Love's simplest stammering sweeter
Than cold phrase of wordy Pharisees.

Anna Lynch Botta.

THE LESSON OF THE BEE.

The honey-bee that wanders all day long
The field, the woodland, and the garden o'er,
To gather in his fragrant winter store;
Humming in calm content his quiet song,
Seeks not alone the rose's glowing breast,
The lily's dainty cup, the violet's lips,
But from all rank and noxious weeds he sips,
The single drop of sweetness closely pressed
Within the poison chalice. Thus, if we,
Seek only to draw forth the hidden sweet
In all the varied human flowers we meet
In the wide garden of humanity,
And, like the bee, if home the spoil we bear,
Hived in our hearts, it turns to nectar there.

LOVE.

Go forth in life, O friend! not seeking love,
A mendicant that with imploring eye
And outstretched hand asks of the passers-by
The alms his strong necessities may move:
For such poor love, to pity near allied,
Thy generous spirit may not stoop and wait,
A suppliant whose prayer may be denied
Like a spurned beggar's at a palace-gate:
But thy heart's affluence lavish uncontrolled, —
The largess of thy love give full and free,
As monarchs in their progress scatter gold;
And be thy heart like the exhaustless sea,
That must its wealth of cloud and dew bestow,
Though tributary streams or ebb or flow.

Francis W. Bourdillon.

LIGHT.

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day has but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies
When its day is done.

LOVE'S REWARD.

For Love I labored all the day,
Through morning chill and midday heat,
For surely with the evening gray,
I thought, Love's guerdon shall be sweet.

At eventide, with weary limb,
I brought my labors to the spot

Where Love had bid me come to him;
Thither I came, but found him not.

For he with idle folks had gone
To dance the hours of night away;
And I that toiled was left alone,
Too weary now to dance or play.

THE DIFFERENCE.

SWEETER than voices in the scented hay,
Or laughing children gleaning ears that stray,
Or Christmas songs that shake the snows above,
Is the first cuckoo, when he comes with love.

Sadder than birds in sunless summer eves,
Or drip of rain-drops on the fallen leaves,
Or wail of wintry waves on frozen shore,
Is spring that comes, but brings us love no more.

◆

WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES.

TO TIME.

O TIME! who know'st a lenient hand to lay
Softest on sorrow's wound, and slowly thence —
Lulling to sad repose the weary sense —
The faint pang stealest, unperceived away;
On thee I rest my only hope at last,
And think when thou hast dried the bitter tear
That flows in vain o'er all my soul held dear,
I may look back on every sorrow past,
And meet life's peaceful evening with a smile —
As some lone bird, at day's departing hour,
Sings in the sunbeam of the transient shower,
Forgetful, though its wings are wet the while:
Yet, ah! how much must that poor heart endure
Which hopes from thee, and thee alone, a cure!

THE GREENWOOD.

OH! when 'tis summer weather,
And the yellow bee, with fairy sound,
The waters clear is humming round,
And the cuckoo sings unseen,
And the leaves are waving green,—
Oh! then 't is sweet,
In some retreat,
To hear the murmuring dove,
With those whom on earth alone we love,
And to wind through the greenwood together.

But when 't is winter weather,
And crosses grieve,
And friends deceive,
And rain and sleet
The lattice beat,—
Oh! then 't is sweet,
To sit and sing
Of the friends with whom, in the days of Spring,
We roamed through the greenwood together.

ANNA C. BRACKETT.

IN GARFIELD'S DANGER.

Is it not possible that all the love
From all these million hearts, which breathless turns
To one hushed room where silent footsteps move,
May have some power on life that feebly burns?
Must it not have some power in some strange way,
Some strange, wise way, beyond our tangled ken,
When far and wide, from sea to sea to-day,
Even in quiet fields, hard-handed men
Pause in their toil to ask the passer-by
"What news?" and then, "We cannot spare him yet!"
Surely no tide can powerless rise so high.
Bear on, brave heart! The land does not forget.
Thou yet shalt be upborne to life and strength again
On this flood-tide of love of millions of brave men.

MARY E. BRADLEY.

BEYOND RECALL.

THERE was a time when death and I
Met face to face together:
I was but young indeed to die,
And it was summer weather;
One happy year a wedded wife,
Yet I was slipping out of life.

You knelt beside me, and I heard,
As from some far-off distance,
A bitter cry that dimly stirred
My soul to make resistance.
You thought me dead: you called my name,
And back from Death itself I came.

But oh! that you had made no sign,
That I had heard no crying!
For now the yearning voice is mine,
And there is no replying:
Death never could so cruel be
As Life — and you — have proved to me!

JOHN G. C. BRAINARD.

EPITHALAMIUM.

I SAW two clouds at morning,
Tinged by the rising sun,
And in the dawn they floated on,
And mingled into one;
I thought that morning cloud was blest,
It moved so sweetly to the west.

I saw two summer currents
Flow smoothly to their meeting,
And join their course with silent force,
In peace each other greeting;
Calm was their course through banks of green,
While dimpling eddies played between.

Such be your gentle motion,
Till life's last pulse shall beat;
Like summer's beam, and summer's stream,
Float on, in joy, to meet
A calmer sea, where storms shall cease —
A purer sky, where all is peace.

MARY BOLLES BRANCH.

THE PETRIFIED FERN.

IN a valley, centuries ago,
Grew a little fern-leaf, green and slender,
Veining delicate and fibres tender;
Waving when the wind crept down so low;
Rushes tall, and moss, and grass grew round it,
Playful sunbeams darted in and found it,
Drops of dew stole in by night, and crowned it,
But no foot of man e'er trod that way;
Earth was young and keeping holiday.

Monster fishes swam the silent main,
Stately forests waved their giant branches,
Mountains hurled their snowy avalanches,
Mammoth creatures stalked across the plain;
Nature revelled in grand mysteries;
But the little fern was not of these,
Did not number with the hills and trees,
Only grew and waved its wild sweet way,
No one came to note it day by day.

Earth, one time, put on a frolic mood,
Heaved the rocks and changed the mighty motion
Of the deep, strong currents of the ocean;
Moved the plain and shook the haughty wood,
Crushed the little form in soft moist clay,
Covered it, and hid it safe away,
O, the long, long centuries since that day!
O, the agony, O, life's bitter cost,
Since that useless little fern was lost!

Useless! Lost! There came a thoughtful man
Searching Nature's secrets, far and deep;
From a fissure in a rocky steep
He withdrew a stone, o'er which there ran
Fairy pencillings, a quaint design,
Veinings, leafage, fibres clear and fine,
And the fern's life lay in every line!
So, I think, God hides some souls away,
Sweetly to surprise us the last day.

ANNE BRONTÉ.

IF THIS BE ALL.

O GOD! if this indeed be all
That life can show to me;
If on my aching brow may fall
No freshening dew from Thee;—
If with no brighter light than this
The lamp of Hope may glow,
And I may only dream of bliss,
And wake to weary woe!—
If friendship's solace must decay
When other joys are gone,
And love must keep so far away,
While I go wandering on,—
Wandering and toiling without gain,
The slave of others' will,
With constant care and frequent pain,
Despised, forgotten still,
Grieving to look on vice and sin,
Yet powerless to quell
The silent current from within,
The outward torrent's swell;
While all the good I would impart
The feelings I would share,

Are driven backward to my heart
  And turned to wormwood there;—
If clouds must ever keep from sight
  The glories of the sun,
And I must suffer winter's blight
  Ere summer is begun;—
If life must be so full of care,
  Then call me soon to Thee!
Or give me strength enough to bear
  My load of misery.

CHARLOTTE BRONTÉ.

LIFE WILL BE GONE ERE I HAVE LIVED.

LIFE will be gone ere I have lived;
  Where now is life's first prime?
I've worked and studied, longed and grieved
  Through all that busy time.
To toil, to think, to long, to grieve—
  Is such my future fate?
The morn was dreary, must the eve
  Be also desolate?
Well, such a life at least makes Death
  A welcome, wished-for friend;
Then aid me, Reason, Patience, Faith,
  To suffer to the end.

EMILY BRONTÉ.

LAST LINES.

  No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
  I see heaven's glories shine,
And Faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

  O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever present Deity!
  Life—that in me has rest,
As I—undying Life—have power in thee!

  Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts; unutterably vain
  Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

  To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by thine infinity;
  So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

  With wide-embracing love
Thy spirit animates eternal years,
  Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

  Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes ceased to be,
  And Thou wert left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

  There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void:
  Thou—Thou art Being and Breath,
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.

REMEMBRANCE.

COLD in the earth—and the deep snow piled above thee,
Far, far removed, cold in the dreary grave!
Have I forgot, my only Love, to love thee,
Severed at last by Time's all-severing wave?

Now, when alone, do my thoughts no longer hover
Over the mountains, on that northern shore,
Resting their wings where heath and fern-leaves cover
Thy noble heart for ever, ever more?

Cold in the earth — and fifteen wild Decembers,
From these brown hills, have melted into spring:
Faithful, indeed, is the spirit that remembers
After such years of change and suffering!

Sweet Love of youth, forgive, if I forget thee,
While the world's tide is bearing me along;
Other desires and other hopes beset me,
Hopes which obscure, but cannot do thee wrong!

No later light has lightened up my heaven,
No second morn has ever shone for me;
All my life's bliss from thy dear life was given,
All my life's bliss is in the grave with thee

But, when the days of golden dreams had perished,
And even Despair was powerless to destroy;
Then did I learn how existence could be cherished,
Strengthened, and fed without the aid of joy.

Then did I check the tears of useless passion —
Weaned my young soul from yearning after thine;
Sternly denied its burning wish to hasten
Down to that tomb already more than mine.

And, even yet, I dare not let it languish,
Dare not indulge in memory's rapturous pain;
Once drinking deep of that divinest anguish,
How could I seek the empty world again?

MARIA GOWEN BROOKS.

[*From Zophiel.*]

SONG OF EGLA.

DAY, in melting purple dying;
Blossoms, all around me sighing;
Fragrance, from the lilies straying;
Zephyr, with my ringlets playing;
Ye but waken my distress;
I am sick of loneliness!

Thou, to whom I love to hearken,
Come, ere night around me darken;
Though thy softness but deceive me,
Say thou'rt true, and I'll believe thee;
Veil, if ill, thy soul's intent,
Let me think it innocent!

Save thy toiling, spare thy treasure;
All I ask is friendship's pleasure;
Let the shining ore lie darkling, —
Bring no gem in lustre sparkling;
Gifts and gold are naught to me,
I would only look on thee!

Tell to thee the high-wrought feeling,
Ecstasy, but in revealing;
Paint to thee the deep sensation,
Rapture in participation;
Yet but torture, if comprest
In a lone, unfriended breast.

Absent still! Ah! come and bless me!
Let these eyes again caress thee.
Once in caution, I could fly thee;
Now, I nothing could deny thee.
In a look if death there be,
Come, and I will gaze on thee!

THE MARRIAGE OF DESPAIR.

THE bard has sung, God never formed a soul
Without its own peculiar mate, to meet
Its wandering half, when ripe to crown the whole
Bright plan of bliss, most heavenly, most complete!
But thousand evil things there are that hate
To look on happiness; these hurt, impede,
And, leagued with time, space, circumstance, and fate,
Keep kindred heart from heart, to pine and pant and bleed.
And as the dove to far Palmyra flying,
From where her native founts of Antioch beam,
Weary, exhausted, longing, panting, sighing,
Lights sadly at the desert's bitter stream, —
So many a soul, o'er life's drear desert faring,
Love's pure, congenial spring unfound, unquaffed,
Suffers, recoils,— then, thirsty and despairing
Of what it would, descends and sips the nearest draught.

Frances Brown.

LOSSES.

UPON the white sea sand
There sat a pilgrim band,
Telling the losses that their lives had known;
While evening waned away
From breezy cliff and bay,
And the strong tide went out with weary moan.

One spake, with quivering lip,
Of a fair freighted ship,
With all his household to the deep gone down;
But one had wilder woe—
For a fair face, long ago
Lost in the darker depths of a great town.

There were who mourned their youth
With a most loving ruth,
For its brave hopes and memories ever green;
And one upon the west
Turned an eye that would not rest,
For far-off hills whereon its joy had been.

Some talked of vanished gold,
Some of proud honors told,
Some spake of friends that were their trust no more;
And one of a green grave
Beside a foreign wave,
That made him sit so lonely on the shore.

But when their tales were done,
There spake among them one,
A stranger, seeming from all sorrow free:
"Sad losses have ye met,
But mine is heavier yet;
For a believing heart hath gone from me."

"Alas!" these pilgrims said,
"For the living and the dead —
For fortune's cruelty, for love's sure cross,
For the wrecks of land and sea!
But, howe'er it came to thee,
Thine, stranger, is life's last and heaviest loss."

HENRY HOWARD BROWNELL.

THE RETURN OF KANE.

Toll, tower and minster, toll
O'er the city's ebb and flow!
Roll, muffled drum, still roll
With solemn beat and slow! —
A brave and a splendid soul
Hath gone — where all shall go.

Dimmer, in gloom and dark,
Waned the taper, day by day,
And a nation watched the spark,
Till its fluttering died away.

Was its flame so strong and calm
Through the dismal years of ice
To die 'mid the orange and the palm
And the airs of Paradise?

Over that simple bier
While the haughty Spaniard bows,
Grief may join in the generous tear,
And Vengeance forget her vows.

Ay, honor the wasted form
That a noble spirit wore —
Lightly it presses on the warm
Spring sod of its parent shore;
Hunger and darkness, cold and storm
Never shall harm it more.

No more of travel and toil,
Of tropic or arctic wild:
Gently, O Mother Soil,
Take thy worn and wearied child.

Lay him — the tender and true —
To rest with such who are gone,
Each chief of the valiant crew
That died as our own hath done —
Let him rest with stout Sir Hugh,
Sir Humphrey, and good Sir John.

And let grief be far remote,
As we march from the place of death,
To the blithest note of the fife's clear throat,
And the bugle's cheeriest breath.

Roll, stirring drum, still roll!
Not a sigh — not a sound of woe,
That a grand and glorious soul
Hath gone where the brave must go.

ALL TOGETHER.

Old friends and dear! it were ungentle rhyme,
If I should question of your true hearts, whether
Ye have forgotten that far, pleasant time,
The good old time when we were all together.

Our limbs were lusty and our souls sublime;
We never heeded cold and winter weather,
Nor sun nor travel, in that cheery time,
The brave old time when we were all together.

Pleasant it was to tread the mountain thyme,
Sweet was the pure and piny mountain ether,
And pleasant all; but this was in the time,
The good old time when we were all together.

Since then I've strayed through many a fitful clime,
(Tossed on the wind of fortune like a feather,)
And chanced with rare good fellows in my time —
But ne'er the time that we have known together.

But none like those brave hearts (for now I climb
Gray hills alone, or thread the lonely heather,)
That walked beside me in the ancient time,
The good old time when we were all together.

Long since, we parted in our careless prime,
Like summer birds no June shall hasten hither;
No more to meet as in that merry time,
The sweet spring-time that shone on all together.

Some, to the fevered city's toil and grime,
And some o'er distant seas, and some — ah! whither?
Nay, we shall never meet as in the time,
The dear old time when we were all together.

And some — above their heads, in wind and rime,
Year after year, the grasses wave and wither;
Aye, we shall meet! — 'tis but a little time,
And all shall lie with folded hands together.

And if, beyond the sphere of doubt and crime,
Lie purer lands — ah! let our steps be thither;
That, done with earthly change and earthly time,
In God's good time we may be all together.

MIDNIGHT — A LAMENT.

Do the dead carry their cares
Like us, to the place of rest?
The long, long night — is it theirs,
Weary to brain and breast?
Ah, that I knew how it fares
With One that I loved the best.

I lie alone in the house.
How the wretched North-wind raves!
I listen, and think of those
O'er whose heads the wet grass waves —
Do they hear the wind that blows,
And the rain on their lonely graves?
Heads that I helped to lay
On the pillow that lasts for aye.
It is but a little way
To the dreary hill where they lie —
No bed but the cold, cold clay —
No roof but the stormy sky.

Cruel the thought and vain!
They've now nothing more to bear —
Done with sickness and pain,
Done with trouble and care —
But I hear the wind and the rain,
And still I think of them there.

Ah, couldst thou come to me,
Bird that I loved the best!
That I knew it was well with thee —
Wild and weary North-West!
Wail in chimney and tree —
Leave the dead to their rest.

THE ADIEU.

SWEET Falsehoods, fare ye well!
That may not longer dwell
In this fond heart, dear paramours of Youth!
A cold, unloving bride
Is ever at my side —
Yet who so pure, so beautiful as Truth?

Long hath she sought my side,
And would not be denied,
Till, all perforce, she won my spirit o'er —
And though her glances be
But hard and stern to me,
At every step I love her more and more.

ALONE.

A SAD old house by the sea.
Were we happy, I and thou,
In the days that used to be?
There is nothing left me now

But to lie, and think of thee
With folded hands on my breast,
And list to the weary sea
Sobbing itself to rest.

LONG AGO.

When at eve I sit alone,
Thinking on the Past and Gone —
While the clock, with drowsy finger,
Marks how long the minutes linger, —
And the embers, dimly burning,
Tell of Life to Dust returning —
Then my lonely chair around,
With a quiet, mournful sound,
With a murmur soft and low,
Come the ghosts of Long Ago.

One by one, I count them o'er,
Voices, that are heard no more,
Tears, that loving cheeks have wet,
Words, whose music lingers yet, —
Holy faces, pale and fair,
Shadowy locks of waving hair —
Happy sighs and whispers dear,
Songs forgotten many a year, —
Lips of dewy fragrance — eyes
Brighter, bluer than the skies —
Odors breathed from Paradise.

And the gentle shadows glide
Softly murmuring at my side,
Till the long unfriendly day,
All forgotten, fades away.

Thus, when I am all alone,
Dreaming o'er the Past and Gone,
All around me, sad and slow,
Come the ghosts of Long Ago.

AT SEA.

Midnight in drear New England,
'Tis a driving storm of snow —
How the casement clicks and rattles,
And the wind keeps on to blow!

For a thousand leagues of coast-line,
In fitful flurries and starts,
The wild North-Easter is knocking
At lonely windows and hearts.

Of a night like this, how many
Must sit by the hearth, like me,
Hearing the stormy weather,
And thinking of those at sea!

Of the hearts chilled through with watching,
The eyes that wearily blink,
Through the blinding gale and snow-drift,
For the Lights of Navesink!

How fares it, my friend, with you? —
If I've kept your reckoning aright,
The brave old ship must be due
On our dreary coast, to-night.

The fireside fades before me,
The chamber quiet and warm —
And I see the gleam of her lanterns
In the wild Atlantic storm.

Like a dream, 'tis all around me —
The gale, with its steady boom,
And the crest of every roller
Torn into mist and spume —
The sights and the sounds of Ocean
On a night of peril and gloom.

The shroud of snow and of spoon-drift
Driving like mad a-lee —
And the huge black hulk that wallows
Deep in the trough of the sea.

The creak of cabin and bulkhead,
The wail of rigging and mast —
The roar of the shrouds as she rises
From a deep lee-roll to the blast.

The sullen throb of the engine,
Whose iron heart never tires —
The swarthy faces that redden
By the glare of his caverned fires.

The binnacle slowly swaying,
And nursing the faithful steel —
And the grizzled old quarter-master,
His horny hands on the wheel.

I can see it — the little cabin —
Plainly as if I were there —
The chart on the old green table,
The book and the empty chair.

On the deck we have trod together,
A patient and manly form,
To and fro, by the foremast,
Is pacing in sleet and storm.

Since her keel first struck cold water,
By the Stormy Cape's clear Light,
'Tis little of sleep or slumber,
Hath closed o'er that watchful sight,
And a hundred lives are hanging
On eye and on heart to-night.

Would that to-night, beside him,
I walked the watch on her deck,
Recalling the Legends of Ocean,
Of ancient battle and wreck.

But the stout old craft is rolling
A hundred leagues a-lee —
Fifty of snow-wreathed hill-side,
And fifty of foaming sea.

I cannot hail him, nor press him
By the hearty and true right hand —
I can but murmur, — God bless him!
And bring him safe to the land.

And send him the best of weather,
That ere many suns shall shine,
We may sit by the hearth together,
And talk about Auld Lang Syne.

WAITING FOR THE SHIP.

[By C. D'W. B.]

We are ever waiting, waiting,
Waiting for the tide to turn —
"For the train at Coventry,"
For the sluggish fire to burn —
For a far-off friend's return.

We are ever hoping, hoping,
Hoping that the wind will shift —
That success may crown our venture—
That the morning fog may lift —
That the dying may have shrift.

We are ever fearing, fearing,
Fearing lest the ship have sailed —
That the sick may ne'er recover —
That the letter was not mailed —
That the trusted firm has failed.

We are ever wishing, wishing,
Wishing we were far at sea —
That the winter were but over —
That we could but find the key —
That the prisoner were free.

Wishing, fearing, hoping, waiting,
Through life's voyage — moored at last,
Tedious doubts shall merge forever
(Be their sources strait or vast,)
In the inevitable Past.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

THE SLEEP.

He giveth His beloved sleep.
Psalm cxxvii. 2.

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward unto souls afar,
Along the Psalmist's music deep.
Now tell me if that any is,
For gift or grace, surpassing this —
"He giveth His belovèd sleep?"

What would we give to our beloved?
The hero's heart, to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tuned harp, to sweep,
The patriot's voice, to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown, to light the brows? —
"He giveth *His* belovèd sleep."

What do we give to our beloved?
A little faith all undisproved,
A little dust to overweep
And bitter memories to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake
"He giveth *His* belovèd sleep."

"Sleep soft, beloved!" we sometimes say
But have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep:
But never doleful dreams again
Shall break the happy slumber when
"He giveth *His* belovèd sleep."

O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O men, with wailing in your voices!
O delvèd gold, the wailers heap!
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God strikes a silence through you all,
And "giveth His belovèd sleep."

His dews drop mutely on the hill,
His cloud above it saileth still,
Though on its slope men sow and reap,
More softly than the dew is shed,
Or cloud is floated overhead,
"He giveth His belovèd sleep."

Ay, men may wonder while they scan
A living, thinking, feeling man,
Confirmed in such a rest to keep;
But angels say, and through the word
I think their happy smile is *heard* —
"He giveth His belovèd sleep."

For me, my heart that erst did go
Most like a tired child at a show,
That sees through tears the mummers leap,
Would now its wearied vision close,
Would childlike on *His* love repose,
Who "giveth His belovèd sleep."

And friends, dear friends — when it shall be
That this low breath is gone from me,
And round my bier ye come to weep,
Let one, most loving of you all,
Say, "Not a tear must o'er her fall —
'He giveth His belovèd sleep.'"

LITTLE MATTIE.

Dead? Thirteen a month ago!
  Short and narrow her life's walk.
Lover's love she could not know
  Even by a dream or talk:
Too young to be glad of youth;
  Missing honor, labor, rest,
And the warmth of a babe's mouth
  At the blossom of her breast.
Must you pity her for this,
And for all the loss it is —
You, her mother, with wet face,
Having had all in your case?

Just so young but yesternight,
  Now she is as old as death.
Meek, obedient in your sight,
  Gentle to a beck or breath
Only on last Monday! yours,
  Answering you like silver bells
Slightly touched! an hour matures:
  You can teach her nothing else.
She has seen the mystery hid
Under Egypt's pyramid:
By those eyelids pale and close
Now she knows what Rhamses knows.

Cross her quiet hands, and smooth
  Down her patient locks of silk,
Cold and passive as in truth
  You your fingers in spilt milk
Drew along a marble floor;
  But her lips you cannot wring
Into saying a word more,
  "Yes," or "No," or such a thing.
Though you call, and beg, and wreak
Half your soul out in a shriek,
She will lie there in default
And most innocent revolt.

Ay, and if she spoke, may be
  She would answer like the Son,
"What is now 'twixt thee and me?"
  Dreadful answer! better none.
Yours on Monday, God's to-day!
  Yours, your child, your blood, your heart,
Called . . . you called her, did you say,
  "Little Mattie," for your part?
Now already it sounds strange,
And you wonder, in this change,
What He calls His angel-creature,
Higher up than you can reach her.

'Twas a green and easy world
  As she took it! room to play,
(Though one's hair might get uncurled
  At the far end of the day.)

What she suffered she shook off
  In the sunshine; what she sinned
She could pray on high enough
  To keep safe above the wind.
If reproved by God or you,
'Twas to better her she knew;
And if crossed, she gathered still,
'Twas to cross out something ill.

You, you had the right, you thought,
  To survey her with sweet scorn,
Poor gay child, who had not caught
  Yet the octave-stretch forlorn
Of your larger wisdom! Nay,
  Now your places are changed so,
In that same superior way
  She regards you dull and low
As you did herself exempt
From life's sorrows. Grand contempt
Of the spirits risen awhile,
Who look back with such a smile!

There's the sting of 't. That, I think,
  Hurts the most, a thousand-fold!
To feel sudden, at a wink,
  Some dear child we used to scold,
Praise, love both ways, kiss and tease.
  Teach and tumble as our own,
All its curls about our knees,
  Rise up suddenly full-grown.
Who could wonder such a sight
Made a woman mad outright?
Show me Michael with the sword,
Rather than such angels, Lord!

TO FLUSH, MY DOG.

. . . . .

Like a lady's ringlets brown,
Flow thy silken ears adown
  Either side demurely
Of thy silver-suited breast
Shining out from all the rest
  Of thy body purely.

Darkly brown thy body is,
Till the sunshine striking this
  Alchemize its dullness;
When the sleek curls manifold
Flash all over into gold,
  With a burnished fulness.

Underneath my stroking hand,
Startled eyes of hazel bland
  Kindling, growing larger,
Up thou leapest with a spring,
Full of prank and curveting,
  Leaping like a charger.

Leap! thy broad tail waves alight;
Leap! thy slender feet are bright,
  Canopied in fringes.
Leap — those tasselled ears of thine,
Flicker strangely, fair and fine,
  Down their golden inches.

Yet, my pretty, sportive friend,
Little is 't to such an end
  That I praise thy rareness!
Other dogs may be thy peers
Haply in those drooping ears,
  And this glossy fairness.

But of *thee* it shall be said,
This dog watched beside a bed
  Day and night unweary, —
Watched within a curtained room,
Where no sunbeam brake the gloom
  Round the sick and dreary.

Roses gathered for a vase,
In that chamber died apace,
  Beam and breeze resigning —
This dog only waited on,
Knowing that, when light is gone
  Love remains for shining.

Other dogs in thymy dew
Tracked the hares and followed through
  Sunny moor or meadow —
This dog only crept and crept
Next to languid cheek that slept,
  Sharing in the shadow.

Other dogs of loyal cheer
Bounded at the whistle clear,
  Up the woodside hieing —
This dog only, watched in reach,
Of a faintly uttered speech,
  Or a louder sighing.

And if one or two quick tears
Dropped upon his glossy ears,
  Or a sigh came double, —
Up he sprang in eager haste,

Fawning, fondling, breathing fast,
In a tender trouble.

. . . .

Therefore to this dog will I,
Tenderly, not scornfully,
Render praise and favor:
With my hand upon his head,
Is my benediction said,
Therefore and forever.

And because he loves me so,
Better than his kind will do
Often, man, or woman,
Give I back more love again
Than dogs often take of men,
Leaning from my Human.

. . . . .

CONSOLATION.

ALL are not taken! there are left behind
Living Belovèds, tender looks to bring,
And make the daylight still a happy thing,
And tender voices to make soft the wind.
But if it were not so — if I could find
No love in all the world for comforting,
Nor any path but hollowly did ring,
Where "dust to dust" the love from life disjoined —
And if before these sepulchres unmoving
I stood alone, (as some forsaken lamb
Goes bleating up the moors in weary dearth)
Crying "Where are ye, O my loved and loving?"
I know a voice would sound, "Daughter, I AM.
Can I suffice for HEAVEN, and not for earth?"

A PORTRAIT.

"One name is Elizabeth." — BEN JONSON.

I WILL paint her as I see her;
Ten times have the lilies blown
Since she looked upon the sun.

And her face is lily-clear —
Lily-shaped, and drooped in duty,
To the law of its own beauty.

Oval cheeks encolored faintly,
Which a trail of golden hair
Keeps from fading off to air:

And a forehead fair and saintly,
Which two blue eyes undershine,
Like meek prayers before a shrine.

Face and figure of a child, —
Though too calm, you think, and tender,
For the childhood you would lend her.

Yet child-simple, undefiled,
Frank, obedient, — waiting still
On the turnings of your will.

Moving light, as all young things —
As young birds, or early wheat
When the wind blows over it.

Only free from flutterings
Of loud mirth that scorneth measure —
Taking love for her chief pleasure:

Choosing pleasures (for the rest)
Which come softly — just as *she*,
When she nestles at your knee.

Quiet talk she liketh best,
In a bower of gentle looks —
Watering flowers, or reading books.

. . . . .

And if any poet knew her,
He would sing of her with falls
Used in lovely madrigals.

And if any painter drew her,
He would paint her unaware
With a halo round her hair.

And a stranger, — when he sees her
In the street even — smileth stilly,
Just as *you* would at a lily.

And all voices that address her,
Soften, sleeken every word,
As if speaking to a bird.

And all fancies yearn to cover
The hard earth whereon she passes,
With the thymy-scented grasses.

And all hearts do pray, "God love her!"
Ay, and always, in good sooth,
We may all be sure He doth.

[*Sonnets from the Portuguese.*]

ASSURANCE.

SAY over again and yet once over again
That thou dost love me. Though the word repeated
Should seem "a cuckoo-song," as thou dost treat it,
Remember never to the hill or plain,
Valley and wood, without her cuckoo-strain,
Comes the fresh Spring in all her green completed!
Belovèd, I amid the darkness greeted
By a doubtful spirit-voice, in that doubt's pain
Cry . . speak once more . . thou lovest! Who can fear
Too many stars, though each in heaven shall roll —
Too many flowers, though each shall crown the year?
Say thou dost love me, love me, love me — toll
The silver iterance!—only minding, dear,
To love me also in silence, with thy soul.

PERFECT LOVE.

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of being and ideal grace.
I love thee to the level of every-day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right:
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise:
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith;
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, — I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

THREE KISSES.

FIRST time he kissed me, he but only kissed
The fingers of this hand wherewith I write,
And ever since it grew more clean and white,
Slow to world-greetings . . quick with its "Oh, list!"
When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst
I could not wear here plainer to my sight,
Than that first kiss. The second passed in height
The first, and sought the forehead, and half missed,
Half falling on the hair. Oh, beyond meed!
That was the chrism of love, which love's own crown,
With sanctifying sweetness, did precede.
The third upon my lips was folded down
In perfect, purple state! since when, indeed,
I have been proud and said, "My love, my own."

THE CRY OF THE HUMAN.

"There is no God," the foolish saith,
But none, "There is no sorrow;"
And nature oft, the cry of faith,
In bitter need will borrow:
Eyes which the preacher could not school,
By wayside graves are raised;
And lips say, "God be pitiful,"
That ne'er said, "God be praised."
Be pitiful, O God!

. . . . . .

We sit together with the skies,
The steadfast skies, above us:
We look into each other's eyes,
"And how long will you love us?"
The eyes grow dim with prophecy,
The voices low and breathless —
"Till death us part!" — O words to be
Our *best* for love, the deathless!
Be pitiful, dear God!

We tremble by the harmless bed
Of one loved and departed —
Our tears drop on the lips that said
Last night, "Be stronger hearted!"
O God, — to clasp those fingers close,
And yet to feel so lonely! —
To see a light upon such brows,
Which is the daylight only!
Be pitiful, O God!

. . . . . .

We sit on hills our childhood wist,
Woods, hamlets, streams, beholding;
The sun strikes through the farthest mist,
The city's spire to golden.
The city's golden spire it was,
When hope and health were strongest,
But now it is the churchyard grass
We look upon the longest.
Be pitiful, O God!

And soon all vision waxeth dull —
Men whisper, "He is dying!"
We cry no more, "Be pitiful!" —
We have no strength for crying;
No strength, no need! Then, soul of mine,
Look up and triumph rather —
Lo! in the depth of God's Divine,
The Son abjures the Father —
Be pitiful, O God!

ONLY A CURL.

Friends of faces unknown and a land
Unvisited over the sea,
Who tell me how lonely you stand,
With a single gold curl in the hand
Held up to be looked at by me!

While you ask me to ponder and say
What a father and mother can do,
With the bright yellow locks put away
Out of reach, beyond kiss, in the clay,
Where the violets press nearer than you: —

Shall I speak like a poet, or run
Into weak woman's tears for relief?
Oh, children! I never lost one.
But my arm's round my own little son,
And Love knows the secret of Grief.

And I feel what it must be and is
When God draws a new angel so
Through the house of a man up to His,
With a murmur of music you miss,
And a rapture of light you forego.

How you think, staring on at the door
Where the face of your angel flashed in,
That its brightness, familiar before,
Burns off from you ever the more
For the dark of your sorrow and sin.

"God lent him and takes him," you sigh . . .
— Nay, there let me break with your pain,
God's generous in giving, say I,
And the thing which he gives, I deny
That he can ever take back again.

He gives what He gives. I appeal
To all who bear babes! In the hour
When the veil of the body we feel
Rent round us, while torments reveal
The motherhood's advent in power;

And the babe cries, — have all of us known
By apocalypse (God being there,
Full in nature!) the child is *our own* —
Life of life, love of love, moan of moan,
Through all changes, all times, everywhere.

He's ours and forever. Believe,
O father! — O mother, look back
To the first love's assurance! To give
Means, with God, not to tempt or deceive
With a cup thrust in Benjamin's sack.

He gives what He gives: be content.
He resumes nothing given—be sure.
God lend? — where the usurers lent
In His temple, indignant he went
And scourged away all those impure.

He lends not, but gives to the end,
As He loves to the end. If it seem
That he draws back a gift, comprehend
'Tis to add to it rather . . . amend,
And finish it up to your dream, —

Or keep . . . as a mother may, toys
Too costly though given by herself,
Till the room shall be stiller from noise,
And the children more fit for such joys,
Kept over their heads on the shelf.

So look up, friends! You who indeed
Have possessed in your house a sweet piece
Of the heaven which men strive for, must need
Be more earnest than others are, speed
Where they loiter, persist where they cease.

You know how one angel smiles there.
Then courage! 'Tis easy for you
To be drawn by a single gold hair
Of that curl, from earth's storm and despair
To the safe place above us. Adieu!

[*From Aurora Leigh.*]

KINDNESS FIRST KNOWN IN A HOSPITAL.

. . . . The place seemed new and strange as death.
The white strait bed, with others strait and white,
Like graves dug side by side, at measured lengths,
And quiet people walking in and out
With wonderful low voices and soft steps,
And apparitional equal care for each,
Astonished her with order, silence, law:
And when a gentle hand held out a cup,
She took it, as you do at sacrament,
Half awed, half melted, — not being used, indeed,
To so much love as makes the form of love
And courtesy of manners. Delicate drinks
And rare white bread, to which some dying eyes
Were turned in observation. O my God,
How sick we must be, ere we make men just!
I think it frets the saints in heaven to see
How many desolate creatures on the earth
Have learnt the simple dues of fellowship
And social comfort, in a hospital.

[*From Aurora Leigh.*]

SELFISHNESS OF INTROSPECTION.

We are wrong always, when we think too much
Of what we think or are; albeit our thoughts

Be verily bitter as self-sacrifice,
We are no less selfish! If we sleep on rocks
Or roses, sleeping past the hour of noon,
We're lazy.

[*From Aurora Leigh.*]

A CHARACTER.

As light November snows to empty nests,
As grass to graves, as moss to mildewed stones,
As July suns to ruins, through the rents,
As ministering spirits to mourners, through a loss,
As Heaven itself to men, through pangs of death
He came uncalled wherever grief had come.

[*From Aurora Leigh.*]

PICTURE OF MARIAN ERLE.

SHE was not white nor brown
But could look either, like a mist that changed
According to being shone on more or less.
The hair, too, ran its opulence of curls
In doubt 'twixt dark and bright, nor left you clear
To name the color. Too much hair perhaps
(I'll name a fault here) for so small a head,
Which seemed to droop on that side and on this,
As a full-blown rose, uneasy with its weight,
Though not a breath should trouble it. Again,
The dimple in the cheek had better gone
With redder, fuller rounds: and somewhat large
The mouth was, though the milky little teeth
Dissolved it to so infantine a smile!
For soon it smiled at me; the eyes smiled too,
But 'twas as if remembering they had wept,
And knowing they should, some day weep again.

[*From Aurora Leigh.*]

THE ONE UNIVERSAL SYMPATHY.

. . . . O WORLD,
O jurists, rhymers, dreamers, what you please,
We play a weary game of hide and seek!
We shape a figure of our fantasy,
Call nothing something, and run after it
And lose it, lose ourselves, too, in the search,
Till clash against us, comes a somebody
Who also has lost something and is lost. . . .

[*From Aurora Leigh.*]

IN STRUGGLE.

ALAS, long suffering and most patient God,
Thou need'st be surelier God to bear with us
Than even to have made us! thou aspire, aspire
From henceforth for me! thou who hast, thyself,
Endured this fleshhood, knowing how, as a soaked
And sucking vesture, it would drag us down
And choke us in the melancholy deep,
Sustain me, that, with thee, I walk these waves,
Resisting! — breathe me upward, thou for me
Aspiring, who art the Way, the Truth, the Life, —
That no truth henceforth seem indifferent,
No way to truth laborious, and no life,
Not even this life I live, intolerable!

ROBERT BROWNING.

PROSPICE.

FEAR death? — to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch-Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go;
Now the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle 's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so, — one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that Death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers,
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears,
Of pain, darkness and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,
Shall change, shall become first a peace, then a joy,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

IN A YEAR.

NEVER any more
While I live,
Need I hope to see his face
As before.
Once his love grown chill,
Mine may strive, —
Bitterly we re-embrace,
Single still.

Was it something said,
Something done,
Vexed him ? was it touch of hand,
Turn of head ?
Strange! that very way
Love begun.
I as little understand
Love's decay.

When I sewed or drew,
I recall
How he looked as if I sang
— Sweetly too.
If I spoke a word,
First of all
Up his cheek the color sprang,
Then he heard.

Sitting by my side,
At my feet,
So he breathed the air I breathed
Satisfied!
I too, at love's brim
Touched the sweet:
I would die if death bequeathed
Sweet to him.

" Speak, — I love thee best!"
He exclaimed.
" Let thy love my own foretell," —
I confessed:
" Cast my heart on thine
Now unblamed,
Since upon thy soul as well
Hangeth mine!"

Was it wrong to own,
Being truth ?
Why should all the giving prove
His alone ?
I had wealth and ease,
Beauty, youth, —
Since my lover gave me love,
I gave these.

That was all I meant,
— To be just,
And the passion I had raised
To content.
Since he chose to change
Gold for dust,
If I gave him what he praised,
Was it strange?

Would he love me yet,
On and on,
While I found some way undreamed,
— Paid my debt!
Give more life and more,
Till, all gone,
He should smile, "She never seemed
Mine before.

"What — she felt the while,
Must I think?
Love's so different with us men,"
He should smile.
"Dying for my sake —
White and pink!
Can't we touch those bubbles then
But they break?"

Dear, the pang is brief.
Do thy part,
Have thy pleasure. How perplext
Grows belief!
Well, this cold clay clod
Was man's heart.
Crumble it, — and what comes next?
Is it God?

EVELYN HOPE.

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!
Sit and watch by her side an hour.
That is her book-shelf, this her bed;
She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die too, in the glass.
Little has yet been changed, I think,
The shutters are shut, — no light may pass
Save two long rays through the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name, —
It was not her time to love; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim,
Duties enough and little cares;
And now was quiet, now astir, —
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late, then, Evelyn Hope?
What! your soul was pure and true;
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire, and dew;
And just because I was thrice as old,
And our paths in the world diverged so wide,
Each was naught to each, must I be told?
We were fellow-mortals, — naught beside?

No, indeed! for God above
Is great to grant as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love;
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed, it may be, for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few;
Much is to learn and much to forget
Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come — at last it will —
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant, I shall say,
In the lower earth, — in the years long still, —
That body and soul so pure and gay?
Why your hair was amber I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red, —
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived, shall I say, so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;
Yet one thing — one — in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed, or itself missed me, —
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
What is the issue? let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while;
My heart seemed full as it could hold, —
There was space and to spare for the frank young smile,
And the red young mouth, and the hair's young gold.
So, hush! I will give you this leaf to keep:
See, I shut it inside the sweet, cold hand.
There, that is our secret! go to sleep;
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

[*From In a Gondola.*]

THE TWO KISSES.

The Moth's kiss, first!
Kiss me as if you made believe
You were not sure, this eve,
How my face, your flower, had pursed
Its petals up; so, here and there
You brush it, till I grow aware
Who wants me, and wide open burst.

The Bee's kiss, now!
Kiss me as if you entered gay
My heart at some noonday,
A bud that dared not disallow
The claim, so all is rendered up,
And passively its shattered cup
Over your head to sleep I bow.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT TO AIX.

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris and he:
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
"Good speed!" cried the watch as the gate-bolts undrew,
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through.
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great pace —
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our place;
I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup and set the pique right,
Rebuckled the check-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting; but while we drew near
Lokeren, the cocks crew and twilight dawned clear;
At Boom a great yellow star came out to see;
At Düffeld 'twas morning as plain as could be;
And from Mecheln church-steeple we heard the half-chime —
So Joris broke silence with "Yet there is time!"

At Aerschot up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare through the mist at us galloping past;
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray;

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear bent back
For my voice, and the other pricked out on his track;
And one eye's black intelligence, — ever that glance
O'er its white edge at me, his own master, askance;
And the thick heavy spume-flakes, which aye and anon
His fierce lips shook upward in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Joris, "Stay spur!
Your Roos galloped bravely, the fault's not in her;
We'll remember at Aix" — for one heard the quick wheeze
Of her chest, saw the stretched neck, and staggering knees,
And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh;
'Neath our feet broke the brittle, bright stubble like chaff;
Till over by Delhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And "Gallop," gasped Joris, "for Aix is in sight!"

"How they'll greet us!" — and all in a moment his roan
Rolled neck and croup over, lay dead as a stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her fate,
With his nostrils like pits full of blood to the brim,
And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let fall,
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer —
Clapped my hands, laughed and sung, any noise, bad or good,
Till at length into Aix, Roland galloped and stood.

And all I remember is friends flocking round,
As I sate with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

[*From The Ring and The Book.*]

DREAMS.

It is the good of dreams — so soon they go!
Wake in a horror of heart-beats you may —
Cry, "The dead thing will never from my thoughts!"
Still, a few daylight doses of plain life,
Cock-crow and sparrow-chirp, or bleat and bell
Of goats that trot by, tinkling to be milked;
And when you rub your eyes awake and wide,
Where is the harm o' the horror? Gone!

[*From The Ring and The Book.*]

THE LACK OF CHILDREN.

What could they be but happy? — balanced so,
Nor low i' the social scale nor yet too high,
Nor poor nor richer than comports with ease,

Nor bright and envied, nor obscure and scorned,
Nor so young that their pleasures fell too thick,
Nor old past catching pleasure when it fell,
Nothing above, below the just degree,
All at the mean where joy's components mix.
So again, in the couple's very souls
You saw the adequate half with half to match,
Each having and each lacking somewhat, both
Making a whole that had all and lacked naught;
The round and sound, in whose composure just
The acquiescent and recipient side
Was Pietro's, and the stirring striving one
Violante's: both in union gave the due
Quietude, enterprise, craving and content,
Which go to bodily health and peace of mind.
But, as 'tis said a body, rightly mixed,
Each element in equipoise, would last
Too long and live forever, — accordingly
Holds a germ — sand-grain weight too much i' the scale —
Ordained to get predominance one day
And so bring all to ruin and release,—
Not otherwise a fatal germ lurked here:
"With mortals much must go, but something stays;
Nothing will stay of our so happy selves."
Out of the very ripeness of life's core
A worm was bred — "Our life shall leave no fruit."
Enough of bliss, they thought, could bliss bear seed,
Yield its like, propagate a bliss in turn
And keep the kind up; not supplant themselves
But put in evidence, record they were,
Show them, when done with, i' the shape of a child.
"'Tis in a child, man and wife grow complete,
One flesh: God says so: let him do his work!"

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN."

OH, deem not they are blest alone
  Whose lives a peaceful tenor keep;
The Power who pities man has shown
  A blessing for the eyes that weep.

The light of smiles shall fill again
  The lids that overflow with tears;
And weary hours of woe and pain
  Are promises of happier years.

There is a day of sunny rest
  For every dark and troubled night;
And grief may bide an evening guest,
  But joy shall come with early light.

And thou, who, o'er thy friend's low bier,
  Sheddest the bitter drops of rain,
Hope that a brighter, happier sphere
  Will give him to thy arms again.

Nor let the good man's trust depart,
  Though life its common gifts deny,
Though with a pierced and bleeding heart,
  And spurned of men, he goes to die.

For God hath marked each sorrowing day
  And numbered every secret tear,
And heaven's long age of bliss shall pay
  For all his children suffer here.

JUNE.

I GAZED upon the glorious sky
And the green mountains round;
And thought that when I came to lie
At rest within the ground,
'Twere pleasant, that in flowery June,
When brooks send up a cheerful tune,
And groves a joyous sound,
The sexton's hand, my grave to make,
The rich, green mountain turf should break.

A cell within the frozen mould,
A coffin borne through sleet,
And icy clods above it rolled,
While fierce the tempests beat —
Away! — I will not think of these —
Blue be the sky and soft the breeze,
Earth green beneath the feet,
And be the damp mould gently pressed
Into my narrow place of rest.

There through the long, long summer hours
The golden light should lie,
And thick young herbs and groups of flowers
Stand in their beauty by.
The oriole should build and tell
His love-tale close beside my cell;
The idle butterfly
Should rest him there, and there be heard
The housewife bee and humming-bird.

And what if cheerful shouts at noon
Come, from the village sent,
Or songs of maids, beneath the moon
With fairy laughter blent?
And what if, in the evening light,
Betrothèd lovers walk in sight
Of my low monument?
I would the lovely scene around
Might know no sadder sight or sound.

I know, I know I should not see
The season's glorious show,
Nor would its brightness shine for me,
Nor its wild music flow;
But if, around my place of sleep,
The friends I love should come to weep,
They might not haste to go.
Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom,
Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their softened hearts should bear
The thought of what has been,
And speak of one who cannot share
The gladness of the scene;
Whose part, in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills,
Is — that his grave is green;
And deeply would their hearts rejoice
To hear again his living voice.

THE PAST.

THOU unrelenting Past!
Strong are the barriers round thy dark domain,
And fetters, sure and fast,
Hold all that enter thy unbreathing reign.

Far in thy realm withdrawn
Old empires sit in sullenness and gloom,
And glorious ages gone
Lie deep within the shadow of thy womb.

Childhood, with all its mirth,
Youth, Manhood, Age, that draws us to the ground,
And last, Man's Life on earth,
Glide to thy dim dominions, and are bound.

Thou hast my better years,
Thou hast my earlier friends — the good — the kind,
Yielded to thee with tears —
The venerable form — the exalted mind.

My spirit yearns to bring
The lost ones back — yearns with desire intense,
And struggles hard to wring
Thy bolts apart, and pluck thy captives thence.

In vain — thy gates deny
All passage save to those who hence depart;
Nor to the streaming eye
Thou giv'st them back — nor to the broken heart.

In thy abysses hide
Beauty and excellence unknown — to thee
Earth's wonder and her pride
Are gathered, as the waters to the sea;

Labors of good to man,
Unpublished charity, unbroken faith,—
Love that midst grief began,
And grew with years, and faltered not in death.

Full many a mighty name
Lurks in thy depths, unuttered, unrevered;
With thee are silent fame,
Forgotten arts, and wisdom disappeared.

Thine for a space are they —
Yet shalt thou yield thy treasures up at last;
Thy gates shall yet give way,
Thy bolts shall fall, inexorable Past!

All that of good and fair
Has gone into thy womb from earliest time,
Shall then come forth to wear
The glory and the beauty of its prime.

They have not perished — no!
Kind words, remembered voices once so sweet,
Smiles, radiant long ago,
And features, the great soul's apparent seat.

All shall come back, each tie
Of pure affection shall be knit again;
Alone shall evil die,
And sorrow dwell a prisoner in thy reign.

And then shall I behold
Him, by whose kind paternal side I sprung,
And her, who, still and cold,
Fills the next grave — the beautiful and young.

THANATOPSIS.

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart; —
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around —
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air —
Comes a still voice : Yet a few days and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,

Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone,— nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world — with kings,
The powerful of the earth — the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun; the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods; rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, traverse Barca's desert sands,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings — yet the dead are there:
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep; the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone; the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come,
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron, and maid,
And the sweet babe, and the gray-headed man,—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take

His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

THE EVENING WIND.

Spirit that breathest through my lattice, thou
That coolest the twilight of the sultry day,
Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow:
Thou hast been out upon the deep at play,
Riding all day the wild blue waves till now,
Roughening their crests, and scattering high their spray
And swelling the white sail. I welcome thee
To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the sea!

Nor I alone—a thousand bosoms round
Inhale thee in the fulness of delight;
And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound
Livelier, at coming of the wind of night;
And, languishing to hear thy grateful sound,
Lies the vast inland stretched beyond the sight.
Go forth into the gathering shade; go forth,
God's blessing breathed upon the fainting earth!

Go, rock the little wood-bird in his nest,
Curl the still waters, bright with stars, and rouse
The wide old wood from his majestic rest,
Summoning, from the innumerable boughs,
The strange, deep harmonies that haunt his breast:
Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly bows
The shutting flower, and darkling waters pass,
And where the o'ershadowing branches sweep the grass.

The faint old man shall lean his silver head
To feel thee; thou shalt kiss the child asleep,
And dry the moistened curls that overspread
His temples, while his breathing grows more deep:
And they who stand about the sick man's bed,
Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep,
And softly part his curtains to allow
Thy visit, grateful to his burning brow.

Go—that the circle of eternal change,
Which is the life of nature, shall restore,
With sounds and scents from all thy mighty range,
Thee to thy birthplace of the deep once more;
Sweet odors in the sea-air, sweet and strange,
Shall tell the home-sick mariner of the shore;
And, listening to thy murmur, he shall deem
He hears the rustling leaf and running stream.

LIFE.

Oh, Life, I breathe thee in the breeze,
I feel thee bounding in my veins,
I see thee in these stretching trees,
These flowers, this still rock's mossy stains.

This stream of odor flowing by,
From clover field and clumps of pine,
This music, thrilling all the sky,
From all the morning birds, are thine.

Thou fill'st with joy this little one,
That leaps and shouts beside me here,
Where Isar's clay white rivulets run
Through the dark woods like frighted deer.

Ah! must thy mighty breath, that wakes
Insect and bird, and flower and tree,
From the low-trodden dust, and makes
Their daily gladness, pass from me —

Pass, pulse by pulse, till o'er the ground
These limbs, now strong, shall creep with pain,
And this fair world of sight and sound
Seem fading into night again?

The things, oh, Life! thou quickenest, all
Strive upward towards the broad bright sky,
Upward and outward, and they fall
Back to earth's bosom when they die.

All that have borne the touch of death,
All that shall live, lie mingled there,
Beneath that veil of bloom and breath,
That living zone 'twixt earth and air.

There lies my chamber dark and still,
The atoms trampled by my feet,
There wait, to take the place I fill
In the sweet air and sunshine sweet.

Well, I have had my turn, have been
Raised from the darkness of the clod,
And for a glorious moment seen
The brightness of the skirts of God;

And knew the light within my breast,
Though wavering oftentimes and dim,
The power, the will, that never rest,
And cannot die, were all from Him.

Dear child! I know that thou wilt grieve
To see me taken from thy love,
Wilt seek my grave at Sabbath eve,
And weep, and scatter flowers above.

Thy little heart will soon be healed,
And being shall be bliss, till thou
To younger forms of life must yield
The place thou fill'st with beauty now.

When we descend to dust again,
Where will the final dwelling be
Of Thought and all its memories then,
My love for thee, and thine for me?

THE FRINGED GENTIAN.

Thou blossom bright with autumn dew,
And colored with the heaven's own blue,
That openest when the quiet light
Succeeds the keen and frosty night.

Thou comest not when violets lean
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,
Or columbines, in purple dressed,
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest,

Thou waitest late and com'st alone,
When woods are bare and birds are flown,
And frosts and shortening days portend
The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue — blue — as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see
The hour of death draw near to me,
Hope, blossoming within my heart,
May look to heaven as I depart.

THE CROWDED STREET.

Let me move slowly through the street,
Filled with an ever-shifting train,
Amid the sound of steps that beat
The murmuring walks like autumn rain.

How fast the flitting figures come!
The mild, the fierce, the stony face;
Some bright with thoughtless smiles, and some
Where secret tears have left their trace.

They pass — to toil, to strife, to rest;
To halls in which the feast is spread;
To chambers where the funeral guest
In silence sits beside the dead.

And some to happy homes repair,
Where children, pressing cheek to cheek,
With mute caresses shall declare
The tenderness they cannot speak.

And some, who walk in calmness here,
Shall shudder as they reach the door
Where one who made their dwelling dear,
Its flower, its light, is seen no more.

Youth, with pale cheek and slender frame,
And dreams of greatness in thine eye!
Goest thou to build an early name,
Or early in the task to die?

Keen son of trade, with eager brow!
Who is now fluttering in thy snare?
Thy golden fortunes, tower they now,
Or melt the glittering spires in air?

Who of this crowd to-night shall tread
The dance till daylight gleam again?
Who sorrow o'er the untimely dead?
Who writhe in throes of mortal pain?

Some, famine-struck, shall think how long
The cold dark hours, how slow the light!
And some who flaunt amid the throng,
Shall hide in dens of shame to-night.

Each, where his tasks or pleasures call,
They pass and heed each other not.
There is who heeds, who holds them all,
In His large love and boundless thought.

These struggling tides of life that seem
In wayward, aimless course to tend,
Are eddies of the mighty stream
That rolls to its appointed end.

THE FUTURE LIFE.

How shall I know thee in the sphere which keeps
The disembodied spirits of the dead,
When all of thee that time could wither, sleeps
And perishes among the dust we tread?

For I shall feel the sting of ceaseless pain
If there I meet thy gentle presence not;
Nor hear the voice I love, nor read again
In thy serenest eyes the tender thought.

Will not thy own meek heart demand me there?
That heart whose fondest throbs to me were given?
My name on earth was ever in thy prayer,
And must thou never utter it in heaven?

In meadows fanned by heaven's life-breathing wind,
In the resplendence of that glorious sphere,
And larger movements of the unfettered mind,
Wilt thou forget the love that joined us here?

The love that lived through all the stormy past,
And meekly with my harsher nature bore,
And deeper grew, and tenderer to the last,
Shall it expire with life, and be no more?

A happier lot than mine, and larger light,
Await thee there; for thou hast bowed thy will
In cheerful homage to the rule of right,
And lovest all, and renderest good for ill.

For me, the sordid cares in which I dwell,
Shrink and consume my heart, as heat the scroll;
And wrath has left its scar — that fire of hell
Has left its frightful scar upon my soul.

Yet though thou wearest the glory of the sky,
Wilt thou not keep the same beloved name,
The same fair thoughtful brow, and gentle eye,
Lovelier in heaven's sweet climate, yet the same?

Shalt thou not teach me, in that calmer home,
The wisdom that I learned so ill in this —
The wisdom which is love — till I become
Thy fit companion in that land of bliss?

THE CONQUEROR'S GRAVE.

Within this lowly grave a Conqueror lies,
And yet the monument proclaims it not,
Nor round the sleeper's name hath chisel wrought
The emblems of a fame that never dies,
Ivy and amaranth in a graceful sheaf,
Twined with the laurel's fair, imperial leaf.
A simple name alone,
To the great world unknown,
Is graven here, and wild flowers, rising round,
Meek meadow-sweet and violets of the ground,
Lean lovingly against the humble stone.

Here in the quiet earth, they laid apart
No man of iron mould and bloody hands,
Who sought to wreck upon the cowering lands
The passions that consumed his restless heart;
But one of tender spirit and delicate frame,
Gentlest in mien and mind,
Of gentle womankind,

Timidly shrinking from the breath of blame;
One in whose eyes the smile of kindness made
  Its haunt, like flowers by sunny brooks in May,
Yet, at the thought of others' pain, a shade
  Of sweeter sadness chased the smile away.

Nor deem that when the hand that moulders here
Was raised in menace, realms were chilled with fear,
  And armies mustered at the sign, as when
Clouds rise on clouds before the rainy East, —
  Gray captains leading bands of veteran men
And fiery youths to be the vulture's feast.
Not thus were waged the mighty wars that gave
The victory to her who fills this grave;
  Alone her task was wrought,
  Alone the battle fought;
Through that long strife her constant hope was staid
On God alone, nor looked for other aid.

She met the hosts of sorrow with a look
  That altered not beneath the frown they wore,
And soon the lowering brood were tamed, and took,
  Meekly, her gentle rule, and frowned no more.
Her soft hand put aside the assaults of wrath,
  And calmly broke in twain
  The fiery shafts of pain,
And rent the nets of passion from her path.
  By that victorious hand despair was slain.
With love she vanquished hate and overcame
Evil with good, in her great Master's name.

Her glory is not of this shadowy state
  Glory that with the fleeting season dies;
But when she entered at the sapphire gate
  What joy was radiant in celestial eyes!
How heaven's bright depths with sounding welcomes rung,
And flowers of heaven by shining hands were flung;
  And He who, long before,
  Pain, scorn, and sorrow bore,
The Mighty Sufferer, with aspect sweet,
Smiled on the timid stranger from his seat;
He who returning, glorious, from the grave,
Dragged Death, disarmed, in chains, a crouching slave.

See, as I linger here, the sun grows low;
  Cool airs are murmuring that the night is near.
Oh, gentle sleeper, from thy grave I go
  Consoled though sad, in hope and yet in fear.
  Brief is the time, I know,
  The warfare scarce begun;
Yet all may win the triumphs thou hast won.
Still flows the fount whose waters strengthened thee;
  The victors' names are yet too few to fill
Heaven's mighty roll; the glorious armory,
  That ministered to thee is open still.

[*From an unfinished poem.*]

AN EVENING REVERY.

The summer day is closed — the sun is set;
Well they have done their office, those bright hours,

The latest of whose train goes softly out
In the red West. The green blade of the ground
Has risen, and herds have cropped it; the young twig
Has spread its plaited tissues to the sun;
Flowers of the garden and the waste have blown
And withered; seeds have fallen upon the soil,
From bursting cells, and in their graves await
Their resurrection. Insects from the pools
Have filled the air awhile with humming wings,
That now are still forever; painted moths
Have wandered the blue sky, and died again;
The mother-bird hath broken for her brood
Their prison shell, or shoved them from the nest,
Plumed for their earliest flight. In bright alcoves,
In woodland cottages with barky walls,
In noisome cells of the tumultuous town,
Mothers have clasped with joy the new-born babe,
Graves by the lonely forest, by the shore
Of rivers and of ocean, by the ways
Of the thronged city, have been hollowed out
And filled, and closed. This day hath parted friends
That ne'er before were parted; it hath knit
New friendships; it hath seen the maiden plight
Her faith, and trust her peace to him who long
Had wooed; and it hath heard, from lips which late
Were eloquent of love, the first harsh word,
That told the wedded one, her peace was flown.
Farewell to the sweet sunshine! One glad day
Is added now to childhood's merry days,
And one calm day to those of quiet age.
Still the fleet hours run on; and as I lean,
Amid the thickening darkness, lamps are lit,
By those who watch the dead, and those who twine
Flowers for the bride. The mother from the eyes
Of her sick infant shades the painful light,
And sadly listens to his quick-drawn breath.

O thou great Movement of the Universe,
Or change, or flight of Time — for ye are one!
That bearest, silently, this visible scene
Into night's shadow and the streaming rays
Of starlight, whither art thou bearing me?
I feel the mighty current sweep me on,
Yet know not whither. Man foretells afar
The courses of the stars; the very hour
He knows when they shall darken or grow bright;
Yet doth the eclipse of Sorrow and of Death
Come unforewarned. Who next, of those I love,
Shall pass from life, or sadder yet, shall fall
From virtue? Strife with foes, or bitterer strife
With friends, or shame and general scorn of men —
Which who can bear? — or the fierce rack of pain,
Lie they within my path? Or shall the years
Push me, with soft and inoffensive pace,
Into the stilly twilight of my age?
Or do the portals of another life

Even now, while I am glorying in my strength,
Impend around me? O! beyond that bourne,
In the vast cycle of being which begins
At that broad threshold, with what fairer forms
Shall the great law of change and progress clothe
Its workings? Gently — so have good men taught —
Gently, and without grief, the old shall glide
Into the new; the eternal flow of things,
Like a bright river of the fields of heaven,
Shall journey onward in perpetual peace.

ROBERT BURNS.

TO MARY IN HEAVEN.

Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usherest in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hearest thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget?
Can I forget the hallowed grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love?
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace;
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last;

Ayr gurgling kissed his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thickening green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twined amorous round the raptured scene.
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray, —
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaimed the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy blissful place of rest?
Seest thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hearest thou the groans that rend his breast?

FOR A' THAT AND A' THAT.

Is there, for honest poverty,
That hangs his head, and a' that?
The coward-slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure, and a' that;
The rank is but the guinea stamp;
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden-gray, and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that:
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

Ye see you birkie, ca'd a lord,
Wha struts, and stares, and a' that;
Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
He's but a coof for a' that:
For a' that and a' that,
His ribband, star, and a' that,
The man of independent mind,
He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith, he mauna fa' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Their dignities, and a' that,
The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
Are higher ranks than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth'
May bear the gree, and a' that
For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet, for a' that;
That man to man, the warld o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that.

STANZAS IN PROSPECT OF DEATH.

Why am I loth to leave this earthly scene!
Have I so found it full of pleasing charms?
Some drops of joy with draughts of ill between:
Some gleams of sunshine 'mid renewing storms;
Is it departing pangs my soul alarms?
Or death's unlovely, dreary, dark abode?
For guilt, for guilt, my terrors are in arms:
I tremble to approach an angry God,
And justly smart beneath his sin-avenging rod.

Fain would I say, "Forgive my foul offence!"
Fain promise never more to disobey;
But, should my Author health again dispense,
Again I might desert fair virtue's way;
Again in folly's path might go astray;
Again exalt the brute, and sink the man;
Then how should I for heavenly mercy pray,
Who act so counter heavenly mercy's plan?
Who sin so oft have mourned, yet to temptation ran?

O Thou, great Governor of all below!
If I may dare a lifted eye to Thee,
Thy nod can make the tempest cease to blow,
And still the tumult of the raging sea;
With that controlling pow'r assist ev'n me,
Those headlong furious passions to confine,
For all unfit I feel my powers to be,
To rule their torrent in the allowèd line;
Oh, aid me with thy help, Omnipotence Divine!

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY.

On turning one down with the plough, in April, 1786.

Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour:
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.

Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet!
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet!
Wi' spreckl'd breast,
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east,

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;

Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent-earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield
High sheltering woods and wa's maun shield,
But thou beneath the random bield
O' clod, or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom sunward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betrayed,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soiled, is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starred!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven
To misery's brink,
Till, wrenched of every stay but heaven,
He, ruined, sink!

Even thou who mournest the daisy's fate,
That fate is thine — no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till, crushed beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom!

JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither;
And monie a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

FAREWEEL TO NANCY.

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae fareweel, alas, forever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee!
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!
Who shall say that fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him!
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy;
But to see her, was to love her;
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met — or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken hearted!

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love, and pleasure.
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage [thee.

[*From To the Unco Guid.*]

GOD, THE ONLY JUST JUDGE.

THEN gently scan your brother man,
Still gentler sister woman;
Tho' they may gang a kennie wrang,
To step aside is human:
One point must still be greatly dark,
The moving *Why* they do it;
And just as lamely can ye mark
How far perhaps they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone
Decidedly can try us,
He knows each chord — its various tone,
Each spring — its various bias:
Then at the balance let's be mute,
We never can adjust it;
What's *done* we partly may compute,
But know not what's *resisted*.

HIGHLAND MARY.

YE banks, and braes, and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie!
There simmer first unfald her robes,
And there the langest tarry;
For there I took my last fareweel
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade,
I clasped her to my bosom!
The golden hours, on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me, as light and life,
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' monie a vow, and lock'd embrace,
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But oh! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary.

Oh, pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
I aft hae kissed sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance,
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mouldering now in silent dust,
That heart that lo'ed me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.

A DIRGE.

WHEN chill November's surly blast
Made fields and forests bare,
One evening, as I wandered forth
Along the banks of Ayr,
I spied a man, whose aged step
Seemed weary, worn with care;
His face was furrowed o'er with years,
And hoary was his hair.

Young stranger, whither wanderest thou?
Began the reverend sage;
Does thirst of wealth thy step constrain,
Or youthful pleasure's rage?
Or, haply, prest with cares and woes,
Too soon thou hast began
To wander forth, with me, to mourn
The miseries of man.

The sun that overhangs yon moors,
Outspreading far and wide,
Where hundreds labor to support
A haughty lordling's pride;
I've seen yon weary winter-sun
Twice forty times return;
And every time has added proofs
That man was made to mourn.

O man! while in thy early years,
How prodigal of time!
Misspending all thy precious hours,
Thy glorious youthful prime!
Alternate follies take the sway;
Licentious passions burn;
Which tenfold force give nature's law
That man was made to mourn.

Look not alone on youthful prime,
Or manhood's active might;
Man then is useful to his kind,
Supported is his right.
But see him on the edge of life,
With cares and sorrows worn;
Then age and want, oh! ill-matched pair!
Show man was made to mourn.

A few seem favorites of fate,
In Pleasure's lap carest;
Yet, think not all the rich and great
Are likewise truly blest.
But, oh! what crowds in every land
Are wretched and forlorn.
Thro' weary life this lesson learn,
That man was made to mourn.

Many and sharp the numerous ills
Inwoven with our frame!
More pointed still we make ourselves,
Regret, remorse, and shame!
And man, whose heaven-erected face
The smiles of love adorn,
Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn!

See yonder poor, o'erlabored wight,
So abject, mean, and vile,
Who begs a brother of the earth
To give him leave to toil;
And see his lordly fellow-worm
The poor petition spurn,
Unmindful, tho' a weeping wife
And helpless offspring mourn.

If I'm designed yon lordling's slave—
By nature's law designed,—
Why was an independent wish
E'er planted in my mind?
If not, why am I subject to
His cruelty or scorn?
Or why has man the will and power
To make his fellow mourn?

Yet, let not this too much, my son,
Disturb thy youthful breast:
This partial view of humankind
Is surely not the last!
The poor, oppressèd, honest man
Had never, sure, been born,
Had there not been some recompense
To comfort those that mourn!

O death! the poor man's dearest friend,
The kindest and the best!
Welcome the hour my aged limbs
Are laid with thee at rest!
The great, the wealthy, fear thy blow
From pomp and pleasure torn;
But, oh! a blest relief to those
That weary-laden mourn!

LOUISA BUSHNELL.

DELAY.

Taste the sweetness of delaying,
Till the hour shall come for saying
That I love you with my soul;
Have you never thought your heart
Finds a something in the part,
It would miss from out the whole?

In this rosebud you have given,
Sleeps that perfect rose of heaven
That in Fancy's garden blows;
Wake it not by touch or sound,
Lest, perchance, 'twere lost, not found,
In the opening of the rose.

Dear to me is this reflection
Of a fair and far perfection,
Shining through a veil undrawn
Ask no question, then, of fate;
Yet a little longer wait,
In the beauty of the dawn.

Through our mornings, veiled and tender,
Shines a day of golden splendor,
Never yet fulfilled by day;
Ah! if love be made complete,
Will it, can it, be so sweet
As this ever sweet delay?

SAMUEL BUTLER.

LOVE.

LOVE is too great a happiness
For wretched mortals to possess;
For could it hold inviolate
Against those cruelties of fate
Which all felicities below
By rigid laws are subject to,
It would become a bliss too high
For perishing mortality;
Translate to earth the joys above;
For nothing goes to Heaven but Love
All love at first, like generous wine,
Ferments and frets until 'tis fine;
For when 'tis settled on the lee,
And from the impurer matter free,
Becomes the richer still, the older,
And proves the pleasanter, the colder

WILLIAM ALLEN BUTLER.

WORK AND WORSHIP.

"Laborare est orare." — ST. AUGUSTINE.

CHARLEMAGNE, the mighty monarch,
As through Metten Wood he strayed,
Found the holy hermit, Hutto,
Toiling in the forest glade.

In his hand the woodman's hatchet,
By his side the knife and twine,
There he cut and bound the faggots
From the gnarled and stunted pine.

Well the monarch knew the hermit
For his pious works and cares,
And the wonders which had followed
From his vigils, fasts, and prayers.

Much he marvelled now to see him
Toiling thus, with axe and cord;
And he cried in scorn, "O Father,
Is it thus you serve the Lord?"

But the hermit resting neither
Hand nor hatchet, meekly said:
"He who does no daily labor
May not ask for daily bread.

"Think not that my graces slumber
While I toil throughout the day;
For all honest work is worship,
And to labor is to pray.

"Think not that the heavenly blessing
From the workman's hand removes;
Who does best his task appointed,
Him the Master most approves."

While he spoke the hermit, pausing
For a moment, raised his eyes
Where the overhanging branches
Swayed beneath the sunset skies.

Through the dense and vaulted forest
Straight the level sunbeam came,
Shining like a gilded rafter,
Poised upon a sculptured frame.

Suddenly, with kindling features,
While he breathes a silent prayer,
See, the hermit throws his hatchet,
Lightly, upward in the air.

Bright the well-worn steel is gleaming,
As it flashes through the shade,
And descending, lo! the sunbeam
Holds it dangling by the blade!

"See, my son," exclaimed the hermit, —
"See the token heaven has sent;
Thus to humble, patient effort
Faith's miraculous aid is lent.

Toiling, hoping, often fainting,
  As we labor, Love Divine
Through the shadows pours its sunlight,
  Crowns the work, vouchsafes the sign!"

Homeward, slowly, went the monarch,
  Till he reached his palace hall,
Where he strode among his warriors,
  He the bravest of them all.

Soon the Benedictine Abbey
  Rose beside the hermit's cell;
He, by royal hands invested,
  Ruled, as abbot, long and well.

Now beside the rushing Danube
  Still its ruined walls remain,
Telling of the hermit's patience,
  And the zeal of Charlemagne.

THE BUSTS OF GOETHE AND SCHILLER.

This is Goethe, with a forehead
  Like the fabled front of Jove;
In its massive lines the tokens
  More of majesty than love.

This is Schiller, in whose features,
  With their passionate calm regard,
We behold the true ideal
  Of the high, heroic bard,

Whom the inward world of feeling
  And the outward world of sense
To the endless labor summon,
  And the endless recompense.

These are they, sublime and silent,
  From whose living lips have rung
Words to be remembered ever
  In the noble German tongue;

Thoughts whose inspiration, kindling
  Into loftiest speech or song,
Still through all the listening ages
  Pours its torrent swift and strong.

As to-day in sculptured marble
  Side by side the poets stand,
So they stood in life's great struggle,
  Side by side and hand to hand,

In the ancient German city,
  Dowered with many a deathless name,
Where they dwelt and toiled together,
  Sharing each the other's fame.

One till evening's lengthening shadows
  Gently stilled his faltering lips,
But the other's sun at noonday
  Shrouded in a swift eclipse.

There their names are household treasures,
  And the simplest child you meet
Guides you where the house of Goethe
  Fronts upon the quiet street;

And, hard by, the modest mansion
  Where full many a heart has felt
Memories uncounted clustering
  Round the words, "Here Schiller dwelt."

In the churchyard both are buried,
  Straight beyond the narrow gate,
In the mausoleum sleeping,
  With Duke Charles, in sculptured state.

For the monarch loved the poets,
  Called them to him from afar,
Wooed them near his court to linger,
  And the planets sought the star.

He, his larger gifts of fortune
  With their larger fame to blend,
Living counted it an honor
  That they named him as their friend;

Dreading to be all forgotten,
  Still their greatness to divide,
Dying prayed to have his poets
  Buried one on either side.

But this suited not the gold-laced
Ushers of the royal tomb,
Where the princely house of Weimar
Slumbered in majestic gloom.

So they ranged the coffins justly,
Each with fitting rank and stamp,
And with shows of court precedence
Mocked the grave's sepulchral damp.

Fitly now the clownish sexton
Narrow courtier-rules rebukes;
First he shows the grave of Goethe,
Schiller's then, and last — the Duke's.

Vainly 'midst these truthful shadows
Pride would flaunt her painted wing;
Here the monarch waits in silence,
And the poet is the king!

MARY F. BUTTS.

OTHER MOTHERS.

Mother, in the sunset glow,
Crooning child-songs sweet and low,
Eyes soft shining, heart at rest,
Rose-leaf cheek against thy breast.

Thinkest thou of those who weep
O'er their babies fast asleep
Where the evening dews lie wet
On their broidered coverlet,

Whose cold cradle is the grave,
Where wild roses nod and wave,
Taking for their blossoms fair
What a spirit once did wear?

Mother, crooning soft and low,
Let not all thy fancies go,
Like swift birds, to the blue skies
Of thy darling's happy eyes.

Count thy baby's curls for beads,
As a sweet saint intercedes,
But on some fair ringlet's gold
Let a tender prayer be told,

For the mother, all alone,
Who for singing maketh moan,
Who doth ever vainly seek
Dimpled arms and velvet cheek.

HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH.

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.

A DREAM OF PONCE DE LEON.

A story of Ponce de Leon,
A voyager withered and old,
Who came to the sunny Antilles,
In quest of a country of gold.
He was wafted past islands of spices,
As bright as the emerald seas,
Where all the forests seem singing,
So thick were the birds on the trees;
The sea was clear as the azure,
And so deep and so pure was the sky
That the jasper-walled city seemed shining
Just out of the reach of the eye.
By day his light canvas he shifted,
And round strange harbors and bars:
By night, on the full tides he drifted,
'Neath the low-hanging lamps of the stars.
'Neath the glimmering gates of the sunset,
In the twilight empurpled and dim,
The sailors uplifted their voices,
And sang to the Virgin a hymn.
"Thank the Lord!" said De Leon, the sailor,
At the close of the rounded refrain;
"Thank the Lord, the Almighty, who blesses
The ocean-swept banner of Spain!

The shadowy world is behind us,
The shining Cipango before;
Each morning the sun rises brighter
On ocean, and island, and shore.
And still shall our spirits grow lighter,
As prospects more glowing unfold;
Then on, merry men! to Cipango,
To the west, and the regions of gold!"

There came to De Leon the sailor,
Some Indian sages, who told
Of a region so bright that the waters
Were sprinkled with islands of gold.
And they added: "The leafy Bimini,
A fair land of grottos and bowers
Is there; and a wonderful fountain
Upsprings from its gardens of flowers.
That fountain gives life to the dying,
And youth to the aged restores:
They flourish in beauty eternal,
Who set but their feet on its shores!"
Then answered De Leon, the sailor:
"I am withered, and wrinkled, and old;
I would rather discover that fountain
Than a country of diamonds and gold."

Away sailed De Leon, the sailor;
Away with a wonderful glee,
Till the birds were more rare in the azure,
The dolphins more rare in the sea.
Away from the shady Bahamas,
Over waters no sailor had seen,
Till again on his wandering vision,
Rose clustering islands of green.
Still onward he sped till the breezes
Were laden with odors, and lo!
A country embedded with flowers,
A country with rivers aglow!
More bright than the sunny Antilles,
More fair than the shady Azores.
"Thank the Lord!" said De Leon, the sailor,
As feasted his eye on the shores,
"We have come to a region, my brothers,
More lovely than earth, of a truth;
And here is the life-giving fountain, —
The beautiful Fountain of Youth."

Then landed De Leon, the sailor,
Unfurled his old banner, and sung,
But he felt very wrinkled and withered,
All around was so fresh and so young.
The palms, ever verdant, were blooming,
Their blossoms e'en margined the seas;
O'er the streams of the forests bright flowers
Hung deep from the branches of trees.
"Praise the Lord!" sang De Leon, the sailor;
His heart was with rapture aflame;
And he said: "Be the name of this region
By Florida given to fame.
'T is a fair, a delectable country,
More lovely than earth, of a truth;
I soon shall partake of the fountain, —
The beautiful Fountain of Youth!"

But wandered De Leon, the sailor,
In search of the fountain in vain;
No waters were there to restore him
To freshness and beauty again.
And his anchor he lifted, and murmured,
As the tears gathered fast in his eye,
"I must leave this fair land of the flowers,
Go back o'er the ocean, and die."
Then back by the dreary Tortugas,
And back by the shady Azores,
He was borne on the storm-smitten waters
To the calm of his own native shores.
And that he grew older and older,
His footsteps enfeebled gave proof,
Still he thirsted in dreams for the fountain, —
The beautiful Fountain of Youth.

. . . . .

One day the old sailor lay dying
On the shores of a tropical isle,
And his heart was enkindled with rapture;
And his face lighted up with a smile.

He thought of the sunny Antilles,
He thought of the shady Azores,
He thought of the dreamy Bahamas,
He thought of fair Florida's shores.
And, when in his mind he passed over
His wonderful travels of old,
He thought of the heavenly country,
Of the city of jasper and gold.
"Thank the Lord!" said De Leon, the sailor,
"Thank the Lord for the light of the truth,
I now am approaching the fountain,
The beautiful Fountain of Youth."

The cabin was silent: at twilight
They heard the birds singing a psalm,
And the wind of the ocean low sighing
Through groves of the orange and palm.
The sailor still lay on his pallet,
'Neath the low-hanging vines of the roof;
His soul had gone forth to discover
The beautiful Fountain of Youth.

Lord Byron (George Gordon Noel).

PROMETHEUS.

Titan! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense?
A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain.
The agony they do not show
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;
And the inexorable heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of fate,
The ruling principle of hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die;
The wretched gift eternity
Was thine — and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack:
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell;
And in thy silence was his sentence,
And in his soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

Thy godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precept less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable spirit,
Which earth and heaven could not convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To mortals of their fate and force;
Like thee, man is in part divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source;
And man in portions can foresee

His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his spirit may oppose
Itself — and equal to all woes,
And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concentered recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making death a victory!

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY.

When coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah! whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stray,
But leaves its darkened dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way?
Or fill at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes, that all survey?

Eternal, boundless, undecayed,
A thought unseen, but seeing all,
All, all in earth, or skies displayed,
Shall it survey, shall it recall:
Each fainter trace that memory holds
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all that was, at once appears.

Before Creation peopled earth,
Its eyes shall roll through chaos back;
And where the furthest heaven had birth,
The spirit trace its rising track,
And where the future mars or makes,
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
While sun is quenched or system breaks,
Fixed in its own eternity.

Above or Love, Hope, Hate, or Fear,
It lives all passionless and pure:
An age shall fleet like earthly year;
Its years as moments shall endure.
Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thoughts shall fly;
A nameless and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS.

Sun of the sleepless! melancholy star!
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,
That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
How like art thou to joy remembered well!
So gleams the past, the light of other days,
Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
A night-beam sorrow watches to behold,
Distinct, but distant — clear — but oh, how cold!

FARE THEE WELL.

Fare thee well! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare *thee well;*
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee,
Which thou ne'er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou wouldst at last discover
'Twas not well to spurn it so.

Through the world for this commend thee —
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found,
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not:
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away:

Still thine own its life retaineth —
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is — that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widowed bed.

And when thou wouldst solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"
Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is pressed,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had blessed!

Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more mayst see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither, yet with *thee* they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee — by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now:

But 'tis done — all words are idle —
Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well! — thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Seared in heart, and lone and blighted,
More than this I scarce can die.

SONNET ON CHILLON.

Eternal spirit of the chainless mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart —
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned —
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar — for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! — May none those marks efface;
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meets in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace,

Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express,
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

INSCRIPTION

ON THE MONUMENT OF THE AUTHOR'S DOG BOATSWAIN.

When some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,
The sculptor's art exalts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rests below;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been.
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labors, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
Unhonored falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth;
While man, vain insect! hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
O man! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
Degraded mass of animated dust!
Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit!
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.
Ye! who perchance behold this simple urn,
Pass on — it honors none you wish to mourn;
To mark a friend's remains these stones arise;
I never knew but one — and here he lies.

MAID OF ATHENS.

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go,
Σώη μού, σάς ἀγαπῶ.[*]

By those tresses unconfined,
Wooed by each Ægean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheek's blooming tinge;
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers that tell
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
Σώη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.
Though I fly to Istambol,
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Σῶη μοῦ, σάς ἀγαπῶ.

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[*] Zóe moú, sás ágapō, *My life, I love you.*

EPISTLE TO AUGUSTA.

My sister! my sweet sister! if a name
Dearer and purer were, it should be thine;
Mountains and seas divide us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine:
Go where I will, to me thou art the same —
A loved regret which I would not resign.
There yet are two things in my destiny,—
A world to roam through, and a home with thee.

The first were nothing — had I still the last,
It were the haven of my happiness;
But other claims and other ties thou hast,
And mine is not the wish to make them less.
A strange doom is thy father's son's, and past
Recalling, as it lies beyond redress;
Reversed for him our grandsire's fate of yore,—
He had no rest at sea, nor I on shore.

If my inheritance of storms hath been
In other elements, and on the rocks
Of perils, overlooked or unforeseen,
I have sustained my share of worldly shocks,
The fault was mine; nor do I seek to screen,
My errors with defensive paradox;
I have been cunning in mine overthrow,
The careful pilot of my proper woe.

Mine were my faults, and mine be their reward.
My whole life was a contest, since the day
That gave me being, gave me that which marred
The gift,— a fate, or will, that walked astray;
And I at times have found the struggle hard,
And thought of shaking off my bonds of clay:
But now I fain would for a time survive,
If but to see what next can well arrive.

Kingdoms and empires in my little day
I have outlived, and yet I am not old;
And when I look on this, the petty spray
Of my own years of trouble, which have rolled
Like a wild bay of breakers, melts away;
Something — I know not what — does still uphold
A spirit of slight patience; — not in vain,
Even for its own sake, do we purchase pain.

Perhaps the workings of defiance stir
Within me — or perhaps a cold despair,
Brought on when ills habitually recur,—
Perhaps a kinder clime, or purer air,
(For even to this may change of soul refer,
And with light armor we may learn to bear,)
Have taught me a strange quiet; which was not
The chief companion of a calmer lot.

I feel almost at times as I have felt
In happy childhood; trees, and flowers, and brooks,
Which do remember me of where I dwelt
Ere my young mind was sacrificed to books,
Come as of yore upon me, and can melt
My heart with recognition of their looks;
And even at moments I think I could see
Some living thing to love — but none like thee.

Here are the Alpine landscapes which create
A fund for contemplation;—to admire
Is a brief feeling of a trivial date:
But something worthier do such scenes inspire:
Here to be lonely is not desolate,
For much I view which I could most desire,
And, above all, a lake I can behold
Lovelier, not dearer, than our own of old.

O that thou wert but with me!—but I grow
The fool of my own wishes, and forget
The solitude which I have vaunted so
Has lost its praise in this but one regret;
There may be others which I less may show;—
I am not of the plaintive mood, and yet
I feel an ebb in my philosophy,
And the tide rising in my altered eye.

I did remind thee of our own dear lake,
By the old Hall which may be mine no more.
Leman's is fair; but think not I forsake
The sweet remembrance of a dearer shore:
Sad havoc Time must with my memory make
Ere *that* or *thou* can fade these eyes before;
Though like all things which I have loved, they are
Resigned for ever, or divided far.

The world is all before me; but I ask
Of Nature that with which she will comply—
It is but in her summer's sun to bask,
To mingle with the quiet of her sky,
To see her gentle face without a mask,
And never gaze on it with apathy.
She was my early friend, and now shall be
My sister—till I look again on thee.

I can reduce all feelings but this one;
And that I would not;—for at length I see
Such scenes as those wherein my life begun
The earliest—even the only paths for me.
Had I but sooner learnt the crowd to shun,
I had been better than I now can be;
The passions which have torn me would have slept;
I had not suffered, and *thou* hadst not wept.

With false Ambition what had I to do?
Little with Love, and least of all with Fame;
And yet they came unsought, and with me grew,
And made me all which they can make—a name.
Yet this was not the end I did pursue;
Surely I once beheld a nobler aim.
But all is over—I am one the more
To baffled millions which have gone before.

And for the future, this world's future may
From me demand but little of my care;
I have outlived myself by many a day;
Having survived so many things that were;
My years have been no slumber, but the prey
Of ceaseless vigils; for I had the share
Of life which might have filled a century,
Before its fourth in time had passed me by.

And for the remnant which may be to come
I am content; and for the past I feel
Not thankless,—for within the crowded sum
Of struggles, happiness at times would steal,
And for the present, I would not benumb
My feelings farther. Nor shall I conceal

That with all this I still can look around,
And worship Nature with a thought profound.

For thee, my own sweet sister, in thy heart
I know myself secure, as thou in mine;
We were and are — I am, even as thou art —
Beings who ne'er each other can resign;
It is the same, together or apart,
From life's commencement to its slow decline
We are entwined — let death come slow or fast,
The tie which bound the first endures the last.

[*From The Giaour.*]

THE FIRST DAY OF DEATH.

He who hath bent him o'er the dead
Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress,
(Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers),
And marked the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there,
The fixed yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And — but for that sad shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not now,
And but for that chill changeless brow,
Where cold Obstruction's apathy
Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;
Yes, but for these and these alone,
Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,
He still might doubt the tyrant's power;
So fair, so calm, so softly sealed,
The first last look by death revealed!

[*From The Giaour.*]

LOVE.

Yes, Love indeed is light from heaven;
A spark of that immortal fire
With angels shared, by Allah given,
To lift from earth our low desire.
Devotion wafts the mind above,
But heaven itself descends in love;
A feeling from the Godhead caught,
To wean from self each sordid thought;
A ray of Him who formed the whole;
A glory circling round the soul!

[*From The Dream.*]

SLEEP.

Our life is twofold! Sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their development have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity;
They pass like spirits of the past — they speak
Like sibyls of the future; they have power —
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;
They make us what we were not — what they will,
And shake us with the vision that's gone by,
The dream of vanished shadows — Are they so?
Is not the past all shadow? What are they?

Creations of the mind? — The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to form which can outlive all flesh.
I would recall a vision which I dreamed
Perchance in sleep — for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

[*From Don Juan.*]

THE ISLES OF GREECE.

The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace, —
Where Delos rose and Phœbus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse:
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."

The mountains look on Marathon —
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;
For standing on the Persian's grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sat on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis:
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations; — all were his!
He counted them at break of day —
And when the sun set, where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now —
The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
Though linked among a fettered race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush — for Greece a tear.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more blest?
Must *we* but blush? — Our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ!

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no; — the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer, "Let one living head.
But one arise, — we come, we come!"
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain — in vain; strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
Hark! rising to the ignoble call —
How answers each bold Bacchanal!

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet,
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus gave, —
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these!

It made Anacreon's song divine:
He served — but served Polycrates —
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!
Oh! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind!
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks —
They have a king who buys and sells;
In native swords, and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells:
But Turkish force and Latin fraud
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
Our virgins dance beneath the shade —
I see their glorious black eyes shine;
But gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marble steep,
Where nothing save the waves and I
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep:
There, swan-like, let me sing and die;
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine--
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

[*From the Prophecy of Dante.*]

GENIUS.

Many are poets who have never penned
Their inspiration, and perchance, the best;
They felt, and loved and died, but would not lend
Their thoughts to meaner beings: they compressed
The God within them, and rejoined the stars
Unlaurelled upon earth, but far more blessed
Than those who are degraded by the jars
Of passion, and their frailties linked to fame,
Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.
Many are poets, but without the name;
For what is poesy but to create
From overfeeling good or ill; and aim
At an external life beyond our fate
And be the new Prometheus of new men,
Bestowing fire from heaven, and then, too late,
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,
And vultures to the heart of the bestower,
Who, having lavished his high gift in vain
Lies chained to his lone rock by the sea-shore!
So be it; we can bear.—But thus all they
Whose intellect is an o'ermastering power,
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay,
Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er
The forms which their creation may essay,
Are bards; the kindled marble's bust may wear
More poesy upon its speaking brow
Than aught less than the Homeric page may bear;

One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,
Or deify the canvas till it shine
With beauty so surpassing all below,
That they who kneel to idols so divine
Break no commandment, for high heaven is there
Transfused, transfigurated: and the line
Of poesy which peoples but the air
With thought and beings of our thought reflected,
Can do no more: then let the artist share
The palm; he shares the peril, and dejected
Faints o'er the labor unapproved —Alas!
Despair and genius are too oft connected.

[*From Childe Harold.*]

THE MISERY OF EXCESS.

TO INEZ.

Nay, smile not at my sullen brow,
Alas! I cannot smile again:
Yet Heaven avert that ever thou
Shouldst weep, and haply weep in vain.

And dost thou ask, what secret woe
I bear, corroding joy and youth?
And wilt thou vainly seek to know
A pang, even thou must fail to soothe?

It is not love, it is not hate,
Nor low ambition's honors lost,
That bids me loathe my present state,
And fly from all I prize the most!

It is that weariness which springs
From all I meet, or hear, or see;
To me no pleasure Beauty brings:
Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me.

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom
The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore;
That will not look beyond the tomb,
And cannot hope for rest before.

What exile from himself can flee?
To zones, though more and more remote.
Still, still pursues, where'er I be,
The blight of life — the demon Thought.

Yet, others rapt in pleasure seem,
And taste of all that I forsake;
Oh! may they still of transport dream,
And ne'er, at least like me, awake'

Through many a clime 'tis mine to go,
With many a retrospection curst;
And all my solace is to know,
What e'er betides, I've known the worst.

What is that worst? Nay, do not ask —
In pity from the search forbear:
Smile on — nor venture to unmask
Man's heart, and view the Hell that's there.

[*From Childe Harold.*]

APOSTROPHE TO THE OCEAN.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean — roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin — his control
Stops with the shore; — upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown.

. . . . . .

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee —
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters washed them power while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts: — not so thou; —
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play —
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow —
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed — in breeze or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving; — boundless, endless, and sublime —
The image of eternity — the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made: each zone
Obeys thee: thou goest forth, dread fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers — they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror — 'twas a pleasing fear.
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And, trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane — as I do here.

[*From Childe Harold.*]

CALM AND TEMPEST AT NIGHT ON LAKE LEMAN (GENEVA).

CLEAR, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wide world I dwelt in is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellowed and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darkened Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and drawing near
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more.

He is an evening reveller who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still,
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven,
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires, — 'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty, and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

All heaven and earth are still — though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep: —
All heaven and earth are still: — From the high host
Of stars, to the lulled lake and mountain-coast,
All is concentred in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being, then doth melt,
And purifies from self: it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,
Like to the fabled Cytherea's stone,
Binding all things with beauty; — 't would disarm
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwalled temple, there to seek
The Spirit in whose honor shrines are weak,
Upreared of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer!

The sky is changed? — and such a change! O night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night: — Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight, —
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black, — and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

. . . . . .

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt, and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless, — if I rest.
But where of ye, O tempests, is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest!

Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me. — could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe — into *one* word,
And that one word were lightning, I would speak:
But as it is I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought sheathing it as a sword.

[*From Childe Harold.*]

BYRON'S REMARKABLE PROPHECY.

And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now
I shrink from what is suffered: let him speak
Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,
Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak;
But in this page a record will I seek.
Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
Though I be ashes; a far hour shall wreak
The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,
And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse!

That curse shall be Forgiveness. — Have I not —
Hear me, my mother Earth! behold it, Heaven! —
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
Have I not suffered things to be forgiven?
Have I not had my brain seared, my heart riven,
Hopes sapped, name blighted, Life's life lied away?
And only not to desperation driven,
Because not altogether of such clay
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
Have I not seen what human things could do?
From the loud roar of foaming calumny
To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
And subtler venom of the reptile crew,
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would seem true,
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain:
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain;
But there is that within me that shall tire
Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire.
Something unearthly, which they deem not of
Like the remembered tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their softened spirits sink, and move
In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

[*From Childe Harold.*]

ONE PRESENCE WANTING.

The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossomed trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scattered cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strewed a scene, which I should see
With double joy wert *thou* with me.

And peasant girls, with deep-blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray
And many a rock which steeply lowers,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers,
But one thing want these banks of Rhine, —
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine!

I send the lilies given to me;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must withered be,
But yet reject them not as such:
For I have cherished them as dear
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And knowest them gathered by the Rhine,
And offered from my heart to thine.

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round:
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
Through life to dwell delighted here;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

[*From Childe Harold.*]

GREECE.

And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
Land of lost gods and godlike men! art thou!
Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of snow;
Proclaim thee nature's varied favorite now;
Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface bow,
Commingling slowly with heroic earth,
Broke by the share of every rustic plough:
So perish monuments of mortal birth,
So perish all in turn, save well-recorded worth;

Save where some solitary column mourns
Above its prostrate brethren of the cave;
Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns
Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the wave;
Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave,
Where the gray stones and unmolested grass
Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave,
Where strangers only, not regardless pass,
Lingering like me, perchance, to gaze, and sigh "Alas!"

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild:
Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields,
Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
And still his honeyed wealth Hymettus yields;
There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
The freeborn wanderer of the mountain air:
Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds.
Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles glare
Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair.

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon:
Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
Defies the power which crushed thy temples gone:
Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.

[*From Childe Harold.*]

APOSTROPHE TO ADA, THE POET'S DAUGHTER.

My daughter! with thy name this song begun —
My daughter! with thy name thus much shall end —
I see thee not, — I hear thee not, — but none
Can be so wrapped in thee; thou art the friend
To whom the shadows of far years extend;
Albeit my brow thou never shouldst behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
And reach into thy heart, — when mine is cold,
A token and a tone, even from thy father's mould.

To aid thy mind's development, — to watch
Thy dawn of little joys, — to sit and see

Almost thy very growth, — to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects, — wonders yet to thee!
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee.
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's kiss, —
This, it should seem, was not reserved for me;
Yet this was in my nature, — as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something like to this.

Yet, though dull hate, as duty should be taught,
I know that thou wilt love me; though my name
Should be shut from thee, as a spell still fraught
With desolation, — and a broken claim:
Though the grave closed between us, 'twere the same.
I know that thou wilt love me; though to drain
My blood from out thy being were an aim,
And an attainment, — all would be in vain, —
Still thou wouldst love me, still that more than life retain.

The child of love, — though born in bitterness,
And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire
These were the elements, — and thine no less.
As yet such are around thee, — but thy fire
Shall be more tempered, and thy hope far higher.
Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea,
And from the mountains where I now respire,
Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou mightst have been to me!

[*From Childe Harold.*]

WATERLOO.

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes looked love, to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage-bell;
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

Did ye not hear it? — No: 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet —
But, hark! — that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! arm! it is — it is — the cannon's opening roar!

. . . .

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum

Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering with white lips "The foe! They come! they come!"

. . . .

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave, — alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valor, rolling on the foe,
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms, — the day
Battle's magnificently-stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
Rider and horse, — friend, foe, — in one red burial blent!

ON COMPLETING MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR.

[*His last verses.*]

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it has ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love:

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone!

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze —
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus* — and 'tis not *here* —
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece — she *is* awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood! — unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

If thou regrett'st thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honorable death
Is here: — up to the field, and give
Away thy breath!

Seek out — less often sought than found —
A soldier's grave, for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

HALLOWED GROUND.

WHAT'S hallowed ground? Has earth a clod
Its Maker meant not should be trod
By man, the image of his God,
Erect and free,
Unscourged by Superstition's rod,
To bow the knee?

That's hallowed ground — where, mourned, and missed,
The lips repose our love has kissed: —
But where's their memory's mansion? Is't
Yon churchyard's bowers!
No! in ourselves their souls exist,
A part of ours.

A kiss can consecrate the ground
Where mated hearts are mutual bound:
The spot where love's first links were wound,
That ne'er are riven,
Is hallowed down to earth's profound,
And up to Heaven!

For time makes all but true love old;
The burning thoughts that then were told
Run molten still in memory's mould;
And will not cool,
Until the heart itself be cold
In Lethe's pool.

What hallows ground where heroes sleep?
'Tis not the sculptured piles you heap!
In dews that heavens far distant weep
Their turf may bloom;
Or genii twine beneath the deep
Their coral tomb:

But strew his ashes to the wind
Whose sword or voice has served mankind —
And is he dead, whose glorious mind
Lifts thine on high? —
To live in hearts we leave behind,
Is not to die.

Is't death to fall for Freedom's right?
He's dead alone that lacks her light!
And murder sullies in Heaven's sight
The sword he draws: —
What can alone ennoble fight? —
A noble cause!

Give that! and welcome War to brace
Her drums! and rend Heaven's reeking space!
The colors planted face to face,
The charging cheer, —
Though Death's pale horse lead on the chase, —
Shall still be dear.

And place our trophies where men kneel
To Heaven! — but Heaven rebukes my zeal!
The cause of Truth and human weal,
O God above!
Transfer it from the sword's appeal
To Peace and Love.

Peace! Love! the cherubim that join
Their spread wings o'er Devotion's shrine,
Prayers sound in vain, and temples shine,
Where they are not;
The heart alone can make divine
Religion's spot.

To incantations dost thou trust,
And pompous rights in domes august?
See mouldering stones and metal's rust
Belie the vaunt,
That men can bless one pile of dust
With chime or chant.

The ticking wood-worm mocks thee, man!
The temples — creeds themselves grow wan!
But there's a dome of nobler span,
A temple given
Thy faith, that bigots dare not ban —
Its space is Heaven!

Its roof star-pictured Nature's ceiling,
Where trancing the rapt spirit's feeling,
And God himself to man revealing,
The harmonious spheres
Make music, though unheard their pealing
By mortal ears.

Fair stars! are not your beings pure?
Can sin, can death your worlds obscure?
Else why so swell the thoughts at your
Aspect above?
Ye must be Heavens that make us sure
Of heavenly love!

And in your harmony sublime
I read the doom of distant time;
That man's regenerate soul from crime
Shall yet be drawn,
And reason on his mortal clime
Immortal dawn.

What's hallowed ground? 'Tis what gives birth
To sacred thoughts in souls of worth!—
Peace! Independence! Truth! go forth
Earth's compass round;
And your high priesthood shall make earth
All hallowed ground.

THE LAST MAN.

All worldly shapes shall melt in gloom,
The sun himself must die,
Before this mortal shall assume
Its immortality!
I saw a vision in my sleep,
That gave my spirit strength to sweep
Adown the gulf of Time!
I saw the last of human mould,
That shall Creation's death behold,
As Adam saw her prime!

The Sun's eye had a sickly glare,
The Earth with age was wan,
The skeletons of nations were
Around that lonely man!
Some had expired in flight, — the brands
Still rusted in their bony hands;
In plague and famine some!
Earth's cities had no sound nor tread,
And ships were drifting with the dead
To shores where all was dumb!

Yet, prophet-like, that lone one stood,
With dauntless words and high,
That shook the sere leaves from the wood
As if a storm passed by,
Saying, "We are twins in death, proud Sun,
Thy face is cold, thy race is run,
'Tis Mercy bids thee go;
For thou ten thousand thousand years
Hast seen the tide of human tears,
That shall no longer flow.

"What though beneath thee man put forth
His pomp, his pride, his skill;
And arts that made fire, flood, and earth,
The vassals of the will?—
Yet mourn I not thy parted sway,
Thou dim discrowned king of day;
For all these trophied arts
And triumphs that beneath thee sprang,
Healed not a passion or a pang
Entailed on human hearts.

"Go, let oblivion's curtain fall
Upon the stage of men,
Nor with thy rising beams recall
Life's tragedy again.
Its piteous pageants bring not back,
Nor waken flesh, upon the rack
Of pain anew to writhe;
Stretched in disease's shapes abhorred
Or mown in battle by the sword,
Like grass beneath the scythe.

"Even I am weary in yon skies
To watch thy fading fire;
Test of all sumless agonies,
Behold not me expire.

"My lips that speak thy dirge of death —
Their rounded gasp and gurgling breath
To see thou shalt not boast.
The eclipse of Nature spreads my pall, —
The majesty of darkness shall
Receive my parting ghost!

"This spirit shall return to Him
Who gave its heavenly spark:
Yet think not, Sun, it shall be dim
When thou thyself art dark!
No! it shall live again and shine
In bliss unknown to beams of thine,
By Him recalled to breath,
Who captive led captivity,
Who robbed the grave of Victory, —
And took the sting from Death!

"Go, Sun, while Mercy holds me up
On Nature's awful waste
To drink this last and bitter cup
Of grief that man shall taste —
Go, tell the night that hides thy face,
Thou saw'st the last of Adam's race,
On Earth's sepulchral clod,
The darkening universe defy
To quench his Immortality,
Or shake his trust in God!"

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND.

A NAVAL ODE.

Ye Mariners of England!
That guard our native seas;
Whose flag has braved a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze!
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe!
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow:
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave!
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And ocean was their grave;
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell,
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

Britannia needs no bulwarks,
No towers along the steep;
Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak,
She quells the floods below —
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart,
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more
And the storm has ceased to blow.

HOW DELICIOUS IS THE WINNING.

How delicious is the winning
Of a kiss at love's beginning,
When two mutual hearts are sighing
For the knot there's no untying!

Yet, remember, 'midst your wooing,
Love has bliss, but love has ruing;
Other smiles may make you fickle,
Tears for other charms may trickle.

Love he comes, and Love he tarries,
Just as fate or fancy carries;
Longest stays, when sorest chidden;
Laughs and flies, when pressed and bidden.

Bind the sea to slumber stilly,
Bind its odor to the lily,
Bind the aspen ne'er to quiver,
Then bind Love to last for ever!

Love's a fire that needs renewal
Of fresh beauty for its fuel;
Love's wing moults when caged and captured,
Only free, he soars enraptured.

Can you keep the bee from ranging,
Or the ring-dove's neck from changing?
No! nor fettered Love from dying
In the knot there's no untying.

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER.

A CHIEFTAIN, to the Highlands bound,
Cries, "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound
To row us o'er the ferry."

"Now who be ye, would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water?"
"O, I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this Lord Ullin's daughter,

"And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

"His horsemen hard behind us ride;
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride
When they have slain her lover?"

Outspoke the hardy Highland wight,
"I'll go, my chief — I'm ready, —
It is not for your silver bright;
But for your winsome lady:

"And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So though the waves are raging white,
I'll row you o'er the ferry."

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking;
And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode armèd men,
Their trampling sounded nearer.

"O haste thee, haste!" the lady cries,
"Though tempests round us gather;
I'll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father." —

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,
When, oh! too strong for human hand,
The tempest gathered o'er her.

And still they rowed amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing:
Lord Ullin reached that fatal shore;
His wrath was changed to wailing.

For sore dismayed, through storm and shade,
His child he did discover;
One lovely hand she stretched for aid,
And one was round her lover.

"Come back! come back!" he cried in grief,
"Across this stormy water:
And I'll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter! — O my daughter!"

'Twas vain: the loud waves lashed the shore,
Return or aid preventing: —
The waters wild went o'er his child,
And he was left lamenting.

FIELD FLOWERS.

YE field flowers! the gardens eclipse you, 'tis true,
Yet, wildings of Nature, I dote upon you,
For ye waft me to summers of old,
When the earth teemed around me with fairy delight,
And when daisies and buttercups gladdened my sight,
Like treasures of silver and gold.

I love you for lulling me back into dreams
Of the blue Highland mountains and echoing streams,
And of birchen glades breathing their balm,
While the deer was seen glancing in sunshine remote,
And the deep mellow crush of the wood-pigeon's note
Made music that sweetened the calm.

Not a pastoral song has a pleasanter tune
Than ye speak to my heart, little wildings of June:
Of old ruinous castles ye tell.
Where I thought it delightful your beauties to find,
When the magic of Nature first breathed on my mind,
And your blossoms were part of her spell.

Even now what affections the violet awakes;
What loved little islands, twice seen in their lakes,
Can the wild water-lily restore;
What landscapes I read in the primrose's looks,
And what pictures of pebbled and minnowy brooks,
In the vetches that tangled their shore.

Earth's cultureless buds, to my heart ye were dear,
Ere the fever of passion, or ague of fear
Had scathed my existence's bloom;
Once I welcome you more, in life's passionless stage,
With the visions of youth to revisit my age, [tomb.
And I wish you to grow on my

HOHENLINDEN.

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat at dead of night
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast arrayed,
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neighed,
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rushed the steed to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of heaven
Far flashed the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stainèd snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds rolling dun,
Where furious Frank and fiery Hun,
Shout in their sulphurous canopy.

The combat deepens. On! ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few shall part where many meet'
The snow shall be their winding-sheet!
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

EXILE OF ERIN.

There came to the beach a poor exile of Erin,
The dew on his thin robe was heavy and chill;
For his country he sighed, when at twilight repairing
To wander alone by the wind-beaten hill.
But the day-star attracted his eye's sad devotion,
For it rose o'er his own native isle of the ocean,

Where once in the fire of his youthful emotion,
He sang the bold anthem of Erin go bragh!

"Sad is my fate!" said the heart-broken stranger;
"The wild deer and wolf to a covert can flee,
But I have no refuge from famine and danger,
A home and a country remain not to me.
Never again, in the green sunny bowers,
Where my forefathers lived, shall I spend the sweet hours,
Or cover my harp with the wild-woven flowers,
And strike to the numbers of Erin go bragh!

"Erin, my country! though sad and forsaken,
In dreams I revisit thy sea-beaten shore;
But, alas! in a far foreign land I awaken,
And sigh for the friends who can meet me no more!
O cruel fate! wilt thou never replace me
In a mansion of peace — where no perils can chase me?
Never again shall my brothers embrace me?
They died to defend me, or lived to deplore!

"Where is my cabin-door, fast by the wild wood?
Sisters and sire, did ye weep for its fall?
Where is the mother that looked on my childhood?
And where is the bosom-friend, dearer than all?
Oh, my sad heart! long abandoned by pleasure,
Why did it dote on a fast-fading treasure?
Tears, like the rain drop, may fall without measure,
But rapture and beauty they can not recall.

"Yet all its sad recollections suppressing,
One dying wish my lone bosom can draw:
Erin! an exile bequeathes thee this blessing!
Land of my forefathers! Erin go bragh!
Buried and cold when my heart stills her motion,
Green be thy fields, — sweetest isle of the ocean!
And thy harp-striking bards sing aloud with devotion, —
Erin mavournin — Erin go bragh!" *

TO THE RAINBOW.

TRIUMPHAL arch, that fill'st the sky
When storms prepare to part!
I ask not proud Philosophy
To teach me what thou art —

Still seem, as to my childhood's sight,
A midway station given
For happy spirits to alight
Betwixt the earth and heaven.

Can all that Optics teach, unfold
Thy form to please me so,
As when I dreamed of gems and gold
Hid in thy radiant bow?

When Science from Creation's face
Enchantment's veil withdraws,
What lovely visions yield their place
To cold material laws!

And yet, fair bow, no fabling dreams,
But words of the Most High,
Have told why first thy robe of beams
Was woven in the sky.

When o'er the green, undeluged earth
Heaven's covenant thou didst shine,
How came the world's gray fathers forth
To watch thy sacred sign!

* Ireland my darling — Ireland forever.

And when its yellow lustre smiled
O'er mountains yet untrod,
Each mother held aloft her child
To bless the bow of God.

Methinks, thy jubilee to keep,
The first-made anthem rang,
On earth delivered from the deep,
And the first poet sang.

Nor ever shall the Muse's eye
Unraptured greet thy beam:
Theme of primeval prophecy,
Be still the prophet's theme!

The earth to thee her incense yields,
The lark thy welcome sings,
When glittering in the freshened fields
The snowy mushroom springs.

How glorious is thy girdle cast
O'er mountain, tower and town,
Or mirrored in the ocean vast,
A thousand fathoms down!

As fresh in yon horizon dark,
As young thy beauties seem,
As when the eagle from the ark
First sported in thy beam.

For, faithful to its sacred page,
Heaven still rebuilds thy span,
Nor lets the type grow pale with age
That first spoke peace to man.

THE RIVER OF LIFE.

The more we live, more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages:
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.

The gladsome current of our youth,
Ere passion yet disorders,
Steals lingering like a river smooth
Along its grassy borders.

But as the careworn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker,
Ye stars, that measure life to man.
Why seem your courses quicker?

When joys have lost their bloom and breath,
And life itself is vapid,
Why, as we reach the Falls of Death,
Feel we its tide more rapid?

It may be strange — yet who would change
Time's course to slower speeding,
When one by one our friends have gone
And left our bosoms bleeding?

Heaven gives our years of fading strength
Indemnifying fleetness;
And those of youth, a seeming length,
Proportioned to their sweetness.

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC.

Of Nelson and the North,
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand,
In a bold determined hand;
And the prince of all the land
Led them on.

Like leviathans afloat,
Lay their bulwarks on the brine;
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:
It was ten of April morn by the chime:
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death;
And the boldest held his breath,
For a time.

But the might of England flushed
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the fleeter rushed
O'er the deadly space between.
"Hearts of oak!" our captain cried, when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back:
Their shots along the deep slowly boom;
Then ceased — and all is wail,
As they strike the shattered sail;
Or, in conflagration pale,
Light the gloom.

Out spoke the victor then,
As he hailed them o'er the wave;
"Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save: —
So peace instead of death let us bring;
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
With the crew, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our king."

Then Denmark blessed our chief,
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As Death withdrew his shades from the day;
While the sun looked smiling bright
O'er a wide and woful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

Now joy, old England, raise
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light!
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep,
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died
With the gallant, good Riou:
Soft sigh the winds of heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing glory to the souls
Of the brave!

SONG.

EARL MARCH looked on his dying child,
And smit with grief to view her —
"The youth," he cried, "whom I exiled,
Shall be restored to woo her."

She's at the window many an hour
His coming to discover:
And *he* looks up to Ellen's bower,
And *she* looks on her lover —

But ah! so pale he knew her not,
Though her smile on him was dwelling,
"And am I then forgot — forgot?"
It broke the heart of Ellen.

In vain he weeps, in vain he sighs,
Her cheek is cold as ashes;
Nor love's own kiss shall wake those eyes
To lift their silken lashes.

TRIBUTE TO VICTORIA.

VICTORIA's sceptre o'er the deep
Has touched, and broken slavery's chain;
Yet, strange magician! she enslaves
Our hearts within her own domain.

Her spirit is devout, and burns
With thoughts averse to bigotry;
Yet she, herself the idol, turns
Our thoughts into idolatry,

[*From the Pleasures of Hope.*]

THE DISTANT IN NATURE AND EXPERIENCE.

AT summer eve, when Heaven's ethereal bow
Spans with bright arch the glittering hills below,
Why to yon mountain turns the musing eye,
Whose sunbright summit mingles with the sky?

Why do those cliffs of shadowy tint appear
More sweet than all the landscape smiling near? —
'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,
And robes the mountain in its azure hue.
Thus, with delight, we linger to survey
The promised joys of life's unmeasured way;
Thus, from afar, each dim-discovered scene
More pleasing seems than all the past hath been,
And every form, that Fancy can repair
From dark oblivion, grows divinely there

. . . .

Auspicious Hope! in thy sweet garden grow
Wreaths for each toil, a charm for every woe;
Won by their sweets, in Nature's languid hour,
The wayworn pilgrim seeks thy summer bower;
There, as the wild bee murmurs on the wing,
What peaceful dreams thy handmaid spirits bring!
What viewless forms th' Æolian organ play,
And sweep the furrowed lines of anxious thought away.

[*From The Pleasures of Hope.*]

HOPE IN ADVERSITY.

Bright as the pillar rose at Heaven's command,
When Israel marched along the desert land,
Blazed through the night on lonely wilds afar,
And told the path, — a never-setting star:
So, heavenly Genius, in thy course divine,
Hope is thy star, her light is ever thine.

[*From The Pleasures of Hope.*]

DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.

Let winter come! let polar spirits sweep
The darkening world, and tempest-troubled deep!
Though boundless snows the withered heath deform,
And the dim sun scarce wanders through the storm,
Yet shall the smile of social love repay,
With mental light, the melancholy day!
And, when its short and sullen noon is o'er,
The ice-chained waters slumbering on the shore,
How bright the fagots in his little hall
Blaze on the hearth, and warm his pictured wall!
How blest he names, in Love's familiar tone,
The kind, fair friend, by nature marked his own;
And, in the waveless mirror of his mind,
Views the fleet years of pleasure left behind,
Since when her empire o'er his heart began!
Since first he called her his before the holy man!

Trim the gay taper in his rustic dome,
And light the wintry paradise of home;
And let the half-uncurtained window hail
Some way-worn man benighted in the vale!
Now, while the moaning night-wind rages high,
As sweep the shot-stars down the troubled sky,
While fiery hosts in Heaven's wide circle play,
And bathe in lurid light the milky-way,
Safe from the storm, the meteor, and the shower,
Some pleasing page shall charm the solemn hour —

With pathos shall command, with wit beguile,
A generous tear of anguish, or a smile.

[*From The Pleasures of Hope.*]

APOSTROPHE TO HOPE.

Unfading Hope! when life's last embers burn,
When soul to soul, and dust to dust return!
Heaven to thy charge resigns the awful hour!
Oh! then, thy kingdom comes, immortal Power!
What though each spark of earth-born rapture fly
The quivering lip, pale cheek, and closing eye!
Bright to the soul thy seraph hands convey
The morning dream of life's eternal day —
Then, then the triumph and the trance begin,
And all the phœnix spirit burns within!

[*From The Pleasures of Hope.*]

AGAINST SKEPTICAL PHILOSOPHY.

Are these the pompous tidings ye proclaim,
Lights of the world, and demigods of Fame?
Is this your triumph — this your proud applause,
Children of Truth, and champion of her cause?
For this hath Science searched on weary wing,
By shore and sea — each mute and living thing!
Launched with Iberia's pilot from the steep,
To worlds unknown and isles beyond the deep?
Or round the cope her living chariot driven,
And wheeled in triumph through the signs of Heaven.
Oh! star-eyed Science, hast thou wandered there,
To waft us home the message of despair?
Then bind the palm, thy sage's brow to suit,
Of blasted leaf, and death-distilling fruit!
Ah me! the laurelled wreath that Murder rears,
Blood-nursed, and watered by the widow's tears,
Seems not so foul, so tainted, and so dread,
As waves the night-shade round the skeptic head.
What is the bigot's torch, the tyrant's chain?
I smile on death, if Heavenward Hope remain:
But, if the warring winds of Nature's strife
Be all the faithless charter of my life,
If Chance awakened, inexorable power
This frail and feverish being of an hour;
Doomed o'er the world's precarious scene to sweep,
Swift as the tempest travels on the deep,
To know Delight but by her parting smile,
And toil, and wish, and weep a little while;
Then melt, ye elements, that formed in vain
This troubled pulse and visionary brain!
Fade, ye wild flowers, memorials of my doom,
And sink, ye stars, that light me to the tomb!
Truth, ever lovely, — since the world began,
The foe of tyrants, and the friend of man, —
How can thy words from balmy slumber start
Reposing Virtue pillowed on the heart!

Yet, if thy voice the note of thunder rolled,
And that were true which Nature never told,
Let Wisdom smile not on her conquered field
No rapture dawns, no treasure is revealed!

Oh! let her read, nor loudly, nor elate,
The doom that bars us from a better fate;
But, sad as angels for the good man's sin,
Weep to record, and blush to give it in!

Thomas Carew.

DISDAIN RETURNED.

He that loves a rosy cheek
  Or a coral lip admires,
Or from starlike eyes doth seek
  Fuel to maintain his fires;
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.

But a smooth and steadfast mind,
  Gentle thoughts and calm desires,
Hearts with equal love combined,
  Kindle never-dying fires: —
Where these are not, I despise
Lovely cheeks or lips or eyes.

No tears, Celia, now shall win,
  My resolved heart to return;
I have searched the soul within
  And find nought but pride and scorn;
I have learned thy arts, and now
Can disdain as much as thou!

ASK ME NO MORE.

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose,
For in your beauty's orient deep
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep,

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day,
For, in pure love, heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale when May is past,
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more where those stars light
That downwards fall in dead of night,
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixèd become as in their sphere.

Ask me no more if east or west
The phœnix builds her spicy nest,
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

Thomas Carlyle.

TO-DAY.

So here hath been dawning another blue day!
Think, wilt thou let it slip useless away?

Out of eternity this new day was born;
Into eternity at night will return.
Behold it aforetime, no eye ever did;
So soon it forever from all eyes is hid.

Here hath been dawning another blue day;
Think, wilt thou let it slip useless away.

CUI BONO?

WHAT is hope? A smiling rainbow
Children follow through the net:
'Tis not here — still yonder, yonder;
Never urchin found it yet.

What is life? A thawing iceboard
On a sea with sunny shore:
Gay we sail; it melts beneath us;
We are sunk, and seen no more.

What is man? A foolish baby;
Vainly strives, and fights, and frets:
Demanding all, deserving nothing.
One small grave is all he gets.

* * *

ALICE CARY.

LIFE.

SOLITUDE! Life is inviolate solitude;
Never was truth so apart from the dreaming
As lieth the selfhood inside of the seeming,
Guarded with triple shield out of all quest,
So that the sisterhood nearest and sweetest,
So that the brotherhood kindest, completest,
Is but an exchanging of signals at best.

Desolate! Life is so dreary and desolate.
Women and men in the crowd meet and mingle,
Yet with itself every soul standeth single,
Deep out of sympathy moaning its moan;
Holding and having its brief exultation;
Making its lonesome and low lamentation;
Fighting its terrible conflicts alone.

Separate! Life is so sad and so separate.
Under love's ceiling with roses for lining,
Heart mates with heart in a tender entwining,
Yet never the sweet cup of love filleth full.
Eye looks in eye with a questioning wonder,
Why are we thus in our meeting asunder?
Why are our pulses so slow and so dull?

Fruitless, fruitionless! Life is fruitionless;
Never the heaped-up and generous measure;
Never the substance of satisfied pleasure;
Never the moment with rapture elate;
But draining the chalice, we long for the chalice,
And live as an alien inside of our palace,
Bereft of our title and deeds of estate.

Pitiful! Life is so poor and so pitiful.
Cometh the cloud on the goldenest weather;
Briefly the man and his youth stay together.
Falleth the frost ere the harvest is in,
And conscience descends from the open aggression
To timid and troubled and tearful concession,
And downward and down into parley with sin.

Purposeless! Life is so wayward and purposeless.
Always before us the object is shifting,

Always the means and the method are drifting,
We rue what is done — what is undone deplore;
More striving for high things than things that are holy.
And so we go down to the valley so lowly,
Wherein there is work, and device never more.

Vanity, vanity! All would be vanity,
Whether in seeking or getting our pleasures,
Whether in spending or hoarding our treasures,
Whether in indolence, whether in strife —
Whether in feasting and whether in fasting,
But for our faith in the Love everlasting —
But for the Life that is better than life.

THE FERRY OF GALLAWAY.

In the stormy waters of Gallaway
My boat had been idle the livelong day,
Tossing and tumbling to and fro,
For the wind was high and the tide was low.

The tide was low and the wind was high,
And we were heavy, my heart and I,
For not a traveller all the day
Had crossed the ferry of Gallaway.

At set o' th' sun, the clouds outspread
Like wings of darkness overhead,
When, out o' th' west, my eyes took heed
Of a lady, riding at full speed.

The hoof-strokes struck on the flinty hill
Like silver ringing on silver, till
I saw the veil in her fair hand float,
And flutter a signal for my boat.

The waves ran backward as if aware
Of a presence more than mortal fair,
And my little craft leaned down and lay
With her side to th' sands o' th' Gallaway.

" Haste, good boatman! haste!" she cried,
" And row me over the other side!"
And she stripped from her finger the shining ring,
And gave it me for the ferrying.

" Woe 's me! my Lady, I may not go,
For the wind is high and th' tide is low,
And rocks, like dragons, lie in the wave, —
Slip back on your finger the ring you gave!"

" Nay, nay! for the rocks will be melted down,
And the waters, they never will let me drown,
And the wind a pilot will prove to thee,
For my dying lover, he waits for me!"

Then bridle-ribbon and silver spur
She put in my hand, but I answered her:
" The wind is high and the tide is low,—
I must not, dare not, and will not go!"

Her face grew deadly white with pain,
And she took her champing steed by th' mane,
And bent his neck to th' ribbon and spur
That lay in my hand, — but I answered her:

" Though you should proffer me twice and thrice
Of ring and ribbon and steed the price, —
The leave of kissing your lily-like hand!
I never could row you safe to th' land."

"Then God have mercy!" she faintly cried,
"For my lover is dying the other side!
O cruel, O cruellest Gallaway,
Be parted, and make me a path, I pray!"

Of a sudden, the sun shone large and bright
As if he were staying away the night;
And the rain on the river fell as sweet
As the pitying tread of an angel's feet.

And spanning the water from edge to edge
A rainbow stretched like a golden bridge,
And I put the rein in her hand so fair,
And she sat in her saddle th' queen o' th' air.

And over the river, from edge to edge,
She rode on the shifting and shimmering bridge,
And landing safe on the farther side,—
"Love is thy conqueror, Death!" she cried.

COUNSEL.

SEEK not to walk by borrowed light,
But keep unto thine own:
Do what thou doest with thy might
And trust thyself alone!

Work for some good, nor idly lie
Within the human hive;
And though the outward man should die,
Keep thou the heart alive!

Strive not to banish pain and doubt,
In pleasure's noisy din;
The peace thou seekest for without
Is only found within.

If fortune disregard thy claim,
By worth, her slight attest;
Nor blush and hang the head for shame
When thou hast done thy best.

. . . . . .

Disdain neglect, ignore despair,
On loves and friendships gone
Plant thou thy feet, as on a stair,
And mount right up and on!

A DREAM.

I DREAMED I had a plot of ground,
Once when I chanced asleep to drop,
And that a green hedge fenced it round,
Cloudy with roses at the top.

I saw a hundred mornings rise,—
So far a little dream may reach,—
And Spring with Summer in her eyes
Making the chiefest charm of each.

A thousand vines were climbing o'er
The hedge, I thought, but as I tried
To pull them down, for evermore
The flowers dropt off the other side!

Waking, I said, "These things are signs
Sent to instruct us that 'tis ours
Duly to keep and dress our vines,—
Waiting in patience for the flowers.

"And when the angel feared of all
Across my hearth its shadow spread,
The rose that climbed my garden wall
Has bloomed the other side," I said.

SPENT AND MISSPENT.

STAY yet a little longer in the sky,
O golden color of the evening sun!
Let not the sweet day in its sweetness die,
While my day's work is only just begun.

Counting the happy chances strewn about
Thick as the leaves, and saying which was best,
The rosy lights of morning all went out,
And it was burning noon, and time to rest.

Then leaning low upon a piece of shade,
Fringed round with violets and pansies sweet,
"My heart and I," I said, "will be delayed,
And plan our work while cools the sultry heat."

Deep in the hills, and out of silence vast,
A waterfall played up his silver tune;
My plans lost purpose, fell to dreams at last,
And held me late into the afternoon.

But when the idle pleasures ceased to please,
And I awoke, and not a plan was planned,
Just as a drowning man at what he sees
Catches for life, I caught the thing at hand.

And so life's little work-day hour has all
Been spent and misspent doing what I could,
And in regrets and efforts to recall
The chance of having, being, what I would.

And so sometimes I cannot choose but cry,
Seeing my late-sown flowers are hardly set;
O darkening color of the evening sky,
Spare me the day a little longer yet.

LIFE'S MYSTERY.

LIFE'S sadly solemn mystery,
Hangs o'er me like a weight;
The glorious longing to be free,
The gloomy bars of fate.

Alternately the good and ill,
The light and dark, are strung;
Fountains of love within my heart,
And hate upon my tongue.

Beneath my feet the unstable ground,
Above my head the skies;
Immortal longings in my soul,
And death before my eyes.

No purely pure, and perfect good,
No high, unhindered power;
A beauteous promise in the bud,
And mildew on the flower.

The glad, green brightness of the spring;
The summer, soft and warm;
The faded autumn's fluttering gold,
The whirlwind and the storm.

To find some sure interpreter
My spirit vainly tries;
I only know that God is love,
And know that love is wise.

NO RING.

WHAT is it that doth spoil the fair adorning
With which her body she would dignify,
When from her bed she rises in the morning
To comb, and plait, and tie
Her hair with ribbons, colored like the sky?

What is it that her pleasure discomposes
When she would sit and sing the sun away—
Making her see dead roses in red roses,
And in the downfall gray
A blight that seems the world to overlay?

What is it makes the trembling look of trouble
About her tender mouth and eyelids fair?
Ah me, ah me! she feels her heart beat double,
Without the mother's prayer,
And her wild fears are more than she can bear.

To the poor sightless lark new powers are given,
Not only with a golden tongue to sing,
But still to make her wavering way toward heaven
With undiscerning wing;
But what to her doth her sick sorrow bring?

Her days she turns, and yet keeps overturning,
And her flesh shrinks as if she felt the rod;
For 'gainst her will she thinks hard things concerning
The everlasting God,
And longs to be insensate like the clod.

Sweet Heaven, be pitiful! rain down upon her
The saintly charities ordained for such;
She was so poor in everything but honor,
And she loved much — loved much!
Would, Lord, she had thy garment's hem to touch.

Haply, it was the hungry heart within her,
The woman's heart, denied its natural right,
That made of her the thing which men call sinner,
Even in her own despite;
Lord, that her judges might receive their sight!

PHŒBE CARY.

NEARER HOME.

One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er;
I am nearer home to-day
Than I ever have been before;

Nearer my father's house,
Where the many mansions be;
Nearer the great white throne,
Nearer the crystal sea;

Nearer the bound of life,
Where we lay our burdens down;
Nearer leaving the cross,
Nearer gaining the crown!

But lying darkly between,
Winding down through the night,
Is the silent unknown stream,
That leads at last to the light.

Closer and closer my steps
Come to the dread abysm:
Closer Death to my lips
Presses the awful chrism.

Oh, if my mortal feet
Have almost gained the brink;
If it be I am nearer home
Even to-day than I think;

Father, perfect my trust;
Let my spirit feel in death,
That her feet are firmly set
On the rock of a living faith!

DEAD LOVE.

We are face to face, and between us here
Is the love we thought could never die;
Why has it only lived a year?
Who has murdered it — you or I?

No matter who — the deed was done
By one or both, and there it lies;
The smile from the lip forever gone,
And darkness over the beautiful eyes.

Our love is dead, and our hope is wrecked;
So what does it profit to talk and rave,
Whether it perished by my neglect,
Or whether your cruelty dug its grave!

Why should you say that I am to blame,
Or why should I charge the sin on you?
Our work is before us all the same,
And the guilt of it lies between us two.

We have praised our love for its beauty and grace;
Now we stand here, and hardly dare
To turn the face-cloth back from the face,
And see the thing that is hidden there.

Yet look! ah, that heart has beat its last,
And the beautiful life of our life is o'er,
And when we have buried and left the past,
We two, together, can walk no more.

You might stretch yourself on the dead, and weep,
And pray as the prophet prayed, in pain;
But not like him could you break the sleep,
And bring the soul to the clay again.

Its head in my bosom I can lay,
And shower my woe there, kiss on kiss,
But there never was resurrection-day
In the world for a love so dead as this.

And, since we cannot lessen the sin
By mourning over the deed we did,
Let us draw the winding-sheet up to the chin,
Ay, up till the death-blind eyes are hid!

THE LADY JAQUELINE.

"False and fickle, or fair and sweet,
I care not for the rest,
The lover that knelt last night at my feet
Was the bravest and the best.
Let them perish all, for their power has waned,
And their glory waxèd dim;
They were well enough while they lived and reigned,
But never was one like him!
And never one from the past would I bring
Again, and call him mine; —
The King is dead, long live the King!"
Said the Lady Jaqueline.

"In the old, old days, when life was new,
And the world upon me smiled,
A pretty, dainty lover I had,
Whom I loved with the heart of a child.
When the buried sun of yesterday
Comes back from the shadows dim,
Then may his love return to me,
And the love I had for him!
But since to-day hath a better thing
To give, I'll ne'er repine; —
The King is dead, long live the King!"
Said the Lady Jaqueline.

"And yet it almost makes me weep,
Aye! weep, and cry, alas!
When I think of one who lies asleep
Down under the quiet grass.
For he loved me well, and I loved again,
And low in homage bent,
And prayed for his long and prosperous reign,
In our realm of sweet content.

But not to the dead may the living cling,
Nor kneel at an empty shrine;—
The King is dead, long live the King!"
Said the Lady Jaqueline.

"Once, caught by the sheen of stars and lace,
I bowed for a single day,
To a poor pretender, mean and base,
Unfit for place or sway.
That must have been the work of a spell,
For the foolish glamour fled,
As the sceptre from his weak hand fell,
And the crown from his feeble head;
But homage true at last I bring
To this rightful lord of mine,—
The King is dead, long live the King!"
Said the Lady Jaqueline.

"By the hand of one I held most dear,
And called my liege, my own!
I was set aside in a single year,
And a new queen shares his throne.
To him who is false, and him who is wed,
Shall I give my fealty?
Nay, the dead one is not half so dead
As the false one is to me!
My faith to the faithful now I bring,
The faithless I resign;—
The King is dead, long live the King!"
Said the Lady Jaqueline.

"Yea, all my lovers and kings that were
Are dead, and hid away,
In the past, as in a sepulchre,
Shut up till the judgment-day.
False or fickle, or weak or wed,
They are all alike to me;
And mine eyes no more can be misled,—
They have looked on loyalty!
Then bring me wine, and garlands bring
For my king of the right divine;—
The King is dead, long live the King!"
Said the Lady Jaqueline.

ARCHIE.

Oh, to be back in the cool summer shadow
Of that old maple-tree down in the meadow;
Watching the smiles that grew dearer and dearer,
Listening to lips that grew nearer and nearer;
Oh, to be back in the crimson-topped clover,
Sitting again with my Archie, my lover!

Oh, for the time when I felt his caresses
Smoothing away from my forehead the tresses;
When up from my heart to my cheek went the blushes,
As he said that my voice was as sweet as the thrush's;
As he told me, my eyes were bewitchingly jetty,
And I answered 't was only my love made them pretty!

Talk not of maiden reserve or of duty,
Or hide from my vision such visions of beauty;
Pulses above may beat calmly and even,—
We have been fashioned for earth, and not heaven;
Angels are perfect, I am but a woman;
Saints may be passionless, Archie is human.

Say not that heaven hath tenderer blisses
To her on whose brow drops the soft rain of kisses;
Preach not the promise of priests or evangels,
Love-crowned, who asks for the crown of the angels?
Yea, all that the wall of pure jasper encloses,
Takes not the sweetness from sweet bridal roses!

Tell me, that when all this life shall be over,
I shall still love him, and he be my lover;
That 'mid flowers more fragrant than clover or heather
My Archie and I shall be always together,
Loving eternally, met ne'er to sever,
Then you may tell me of heaven forever.

CONCLUSIONS.

I SAID, if I might go back again
To the very hour and place of my birth;
Might have my life whatever I chose,
And live it in any part of the earth;

Put perfect sunshine into my sky,
Banish the shadow of sorrow and doubt;
Have all my happiness multiplied,
And all my suffering stricken out;

If I could have known in the years now gone,
The best that a woman comes to know;
Could have had whatever will make her blest,
Or whatever she thinks will make her so;

Have found the highest and purest bliss
That the bridal-wreath and ring enclose;
And gained the one out of all the world,
That my heart as well as my reason chose;

And if this had been, and I stood to-night
By my children, lying asleep in their beds
And could count in my prayers, for a rosary,
The shining row of their golden heads;

Yea! I said, if a miracle such as this
Could be wrought for me, at my bidding, still
I would choose to have my past as it is,
And to let my future come as it will!

I would not make the path I have trod
More pleasant or even, more straight or wide;
Nor change my course the breadth of a hair,
This way or that way, to either side.

My past is mine, and I take it all;
Its weakness, — its folly, if you please;
Nay, even my sins, if you come to that,
May have been my helps, not hindrances!

If I saved my body from the flames
Because that once I had burned my hand;
Or kept myself from a greater sin
By doing a less, — you will understand;

It was better I suffered a little pain,
Better I sinned for a little time,
If the smarting warned me back from death,
And the sting of sin withheld from crime.

Who knows his strength, by trial, will know
What strength must be set against a sin;
And how temptation is overcome
He has learned, who has felt its power within!

And who knows how a life at the last may show?
Why, look at the moon from where we stand!
Opaque, uneven, you say; yet it shines,
A luminous sphere, complete and grand!

So let my past stand, just as it stands,
And let me now, as I may, grow old;
I am what I am, and my life for me
Is the best,—or it had not been, I hold.

ANSWERED.

I THOUGHT to find some healing clime
For her I loved; she found that shore,
That city, whose inhabitants
Are sick and sorrowful no more.

I asked for human love for her;
The Loving knew how best to still
The infinite yearning of a heart,
Which but infinity could fill.

Such sweet communion had been ours
I prayed that 't might never end;
My prayer is more than answered; now
I have an angel for my friend.

I wished for perfect peace, to soothe
The troubled anguish of her breast;
And, numbered with the loved and called,
She entered on untroubled rest.

Life was so fair a thing to her,
I wept and pleaded for its stay;
My wish was granted me, for lo!
She hath eternal life to-day.

OUR HOMESTEAD.

OUR old brown homestead reared its walls
From the way-side dust aloof,
Where the apple-boughs could almost cast
Their fruit upon its roof;
And the cherry-tree so near it grew
That when awake I've lain
In the lonesome nights, I've heard the limbs
As they creaked against the pane:
And those orchard trees, oh those orchard trees!
I've seen my little brothers rocked
In their tops by the summer breeze.

The sweet-briar, under the window-sill,
Which the early birds made glad,
And the damask rose, by the garden-fence,
Were all the flowers we had.
I've looked at many a flower since then,
Exotics rich and rare,
That to other eyes were lovelier
But not to me so fair;
For those roses bright, oh, those roses bright!
I have twined them in my sister's locks
That are hid in the dust from sight.

We had a well, a deep old well,
Where the spring was never dry,
And the cool drops down from the mossy stones
Were falling constantly;
And there never was water half so sweet
As the draught which filled my cup,
Drawn up to the curb by the rude old sweep
That my father's hand set up.
And that deep old well, oh that deep old well!
I remember now the plashing sound
Of the bucket as it fell.

Our homestead had an ample hearth,
Where at night we loved to meet;
There my mother's voice was always kind,
And her smile was always sweet;
And there I've sat on my father's knee,
And watched his thoughtful brow.
With my childish hand in his raven hair,—
That hair is silver now!
But that broad hearth's light, oh, that broad hearth's light!
And my father's look, and my mother's smile,
They are in my heart to-night!

LUELLA CLARK.

IF YOU LOVE ME.

If you love me, tell me not;
Let me read it in your thought;
Let me feel it in the way
That you say me yea and nay;

Let me see it in your eye
When you greet or pass me by;
Let me hear it in the tone
Meant for me and me alone.

If you love me, there will be
Something only I shall see;
Meet or miss me, stay or go,
If you love me, I shall know.

Something in your tone will tell,
"Dear, I love you, love you well."
Something in your eyes will shine
Fairer that they look in mine.

In your mien some touch of grace,
Some swift smile upon your face
While you speak not, will betray
What your lips could scarcely say.

In your speech some silver word,
Tuning into sweet accord
All your bluntness will reveal,
Unaware, the love you feel.

If you love me, then, I pray,
Tell me not, but, day by day,
Let love silent on me rise,
Like the sun in summer skies.

◆

SARAH D. CLARK.

THE SOLDANELLA.

In the warm valley, rich in summer's wealth,
Where tangled weed and shrub thin leaves unclose,
Profuse and hardy in luxuriant health,
The Soldanella grows.

Common — if aught be common in God's care,—
Its buds no beauty show to charm the eye,
Nor graceful pencillings in colors rare,
Enchant the passer-by.

Yet, on yon distant heights of ice-pearled snow,
Where mortals barely can a pathway trace,
The Alpine blossom of the vale below
Blooms in ethereal grace.

Unlike, and yet the same, its petals blow
Most like a crystal lily in the air;
A dream of beauty 'mid the cheerless snow,—
A comfort in despair.

How came it trembling in the icy gloom
Where awful steppes and frowning glaciers rise
So marvellous in presence and in bloom
Even to angelic eyes?

While thus I mused, the fragile blossom seemed
Instinct with life, a spirit-form to take;
Its fringed corolla with new radiance beamed
A voice within it spake: —

"Men marvel on these airy fields of space
My tender form emergent to behold,
A blossom of the skies — my name they trace
With stars and suns enrolled.

"Though born and nurtured in the lowly vale,
Ignoble ease I was not doomed to bear;
I pined to scale the heights where eagles sail,
And paled for Freedom's air!

"Not without toil my painful steps were bent
Through paths imperilled, and the icy sea,
From Alp to Alp I gained my steep ascent,
And hard-won victory!

'If these pale lips, so soon to close in death,
One touch of hope or solace can impart,
Take, with the fragrance of my latest breath,
This lesson to thy heart:

"Go thou, to triumph in some glorious strife,
Through daring paths some noble cause retrieve;
Seek, to the highest measure of thy life,
Thy purpose to achieve.

"Go tell the world, in Freedom's battle drawn,
For one brief hour, its horoscope I see;
Tell one by one who fall, 'Swift comes the dawn
To herald victory.'"

It ceased — the murmur died upon mine ear.
Straightway a threatening blast the trumpet gave;
The next wind bore the seedling of the year
On to its snowy grave!

MARY CLEMMER.

WORDS FOR PARTING.

Oh, what shall I do, dear,
In the coming years, I wonder,
When our paths, which lie so sweetly near,
Shall lie so far asunder?
Oh, what shall I do, dear,
Through all the sad to-morrows,
When the sunny smile has ceased to cheer
That smiles away my sorrows?

What shall I do, my friend,
When you are gone forever?
My heart its eager need will send
Through the years to find you never.
And how will it be with you,
In the weary world, I wonder,
Will you love me with a love as true,
When our paths lie far asunder?

A sweeter, sadder thing
My life, for having known you;
Forever with my sacred kin,
My soul's soul I must own you.
Forever mine, my friend,
From June to life's December;
Not mine to have or hold,
But to pray for and remember.

The way is short, O friend,
That reaches out before us;
God's tender heavens above us bend
His love is smiling o'er us;
A little while is ours
For sorrow or for laughter;
I'll lay the hand you love in yours
On the shore of the Hereafter.

NANTASKET.

Fair is thy face, Nantasket,
And fair thy curving shores,—
The peering spires of villages,
The boatman's dipping oars,
The lonely ledge of Minot,
Where the watchman tends his light,
And sets his perilous beacon,
A star in the stormiest night.

Over thy vast sea highway,
The great ships slide from sight,
And flocks of wingèd phantoms
Flit by, like birds in flight.
Over the toppling sea-wall
The home-bound dories float,
And I watch the patient fisherman
Bend in his anchored boat.

I am alone with Nature;
With the glad September day.
The leaning hills above me
With golden-rod are gay,
Across the fields of ether
Flit butterflies at play,
And cones of garnet sumach
Glow down the country way.

The autumn dandelion
Along the roadside burns;
Down from the lichened boulders
Quiver the plumèd ferns;
The cream-white silk of the milkweed
Floats from its sea-green pod;
Out from the mossy rock-seams
Flashes the golden-rod.

The woodbine's scarlet banners
Flaunt from their towers of stone;
The wan, wild morning-glory
Dies by the road alone;
By the hill-path to the seaside
Wave myriad azure bells;
And over the grassy ramparts lean
The milky immortelles.

Hosts of gold-hearted daisies
Nod by the wayside bars;
The tangled thicket of green is set
With the aster's purple stars;
Beside the brook the gentian
Closes its fringèd eyes,
And waits the later glory
Of October's yellow skies.

Within the sea-washed meadow
The wild grape climbs the wall,
And from the o'er-ripe chestnuts
The brown burs softly fall.
I see the tall reeds shiver
Beside the salt sea marge;
I see the sea-bird glimmer,
Far out on airy barge.

I hear in the groves of Hingham
The friendly caw of the crow,
Till I sit again in Wachusett's woods,
In August's sumptuous glow.
The tiny boom of the beetle
Strikes the shining rocks below;
The gauzy oar of the dragon-fly
Is beating to and fro.

As the lovely ghost of the thistle
Goes sailing softly by;
Glad in its second summer
Hums the awakened fly;
The cumulate cry of the cricket
Pierces the amber noon;
In from the vast sea-spaces comes
The clear call of the loon;
Over and through it all I hear
Ocean's pervasive rune.

Against the warm sea-beaches
Rush the wavelets' eager lips;
Away o'er the sapphire reaches
Move on the stately ships.
Peace floats on all their pennons,
Sailing silently the main,
As if never human anguish,
As if never human pain,
Sought the healing draught of Lethe,
Beyond the gleaming plain.

Fair is the earth behind me,
Vast is the sea before,
Away through the misty dimness
Glimmers a further shore.
It is no realm enchanted,
It cannot be more fair
Than this nook of Nature's Kingdom
With its spell of space and air.

WAITING.

I WAIT,—
Till from my veiled brows shall fall
This baffling cloud, this wearying thrall,
Which holds me now from knowing all;
Until my spirit-sight shall see
Into all being's mystery,
See what it really is to be!

I wait,—
While rolling days in mockery fling
Such cruel loss athwart my spring,
And life flags on with broken wing;
Believing that a kindlier fate
The patient soul will compensate
For all it loses, ere too late.

I wait!
For surely every scanty seed
I plant in weakness and in need
Will blossom in perfected deed!
Mine eyes shall see its affluent crown,
Its fragrant fruitage, dropping down
Care's lowly levels, bare and brown!

. . . . .

I wait!
The summer of the soul is long,
Its harvests yet shall round me throng
In perfect pomp of sun and song.
In stormless mornings yet to be
I'll pluck from life's full-fruited tree
The joy to-day denied to me.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH.

NO MORE.

MY wind has turned to bitter north,
That was so soft a south before;
My sky, that shone so sunny bright,
With foggy gloom is clouded o'er;
My gay green leaves are yellow-black
Upon the dark autumnal floor;
For love, departed once, comes back
No more again, no more.

A roofless ruin lies my home,
For winds to blow and rains to pour;
One frosty night befell—and lo!
I find my summer days are o'er.
The heart bereaved, of why and how
Unknowing, knows that yet before
It had what e'en to memory now
Returns no more, no more.

BECALMED AT EVE.

As ships, becalmed at eve, that lay
With canvas drooping, side by side,
Two towers of sail, at dawn of day
Are scarce long leagues apart descried;

When fell the night, upsprung the breeze,
And all the darkling hours they plied;
Nor dreamt but each the self-same seas
By each was cleaving, side by side:

E'en so — but why the tale reveal
Of those whom, year by year unchanged,
Brief absence joined anew, to feel,
Astounded, soul from soul estranged.

At dead of night their sails were filled,
And onward each rejoicing steered;
Ah! neither blamed, for neither willed
Or wist what first with dawn appeared.

To veer, how vain! On, onward strain,
Brave barks! In light, in darkness too!
Through winds and tides one compass guides —
To that and your own selves be true.

But O blithe breeze! and O great seas,
Though ne'er that earliest parting past,
On your wide plain they join again,
Together lead them home at last.

One port, methought, alike they sought —
One purpose hold where'er they fare;
O bounding breeze, O rushing seas,
At last, at last unite them there!

NATURA NATURANS.

Beside me,— in the car,— she sat;
She spake not, no, nor looked to me.
From her to me, from me to her,
What passed so subtly, stealthily?
As rose to rose, that by it blows,
Its interchanged aroma flings;
Or wake to sound of one sweet note
The virtues of disparted strings.

Beside me, nought but this? — but this,
That influent; as within me dwelt
Her life; mine too within her breast,
Her brain, her every limb, she felt.
We sat; while o'er and in us, more
And more, a power unknown prevailed,
Inhaling and inhaled,— and still
'Twas one, inhaling or inhaled.

Beside me, nought but this; and passed —
I passed; and know not to this day
If gold or jet her girlish hair —
If black, or brown, or lucid-gray
Her eye's young glance. The fickle chance
That joined us yet may join again;
But I no face again could greet
As hers, whose life was in me then.

As unsuspecting mere a maid —
As fresh in maidhood's bloomiest bloom —
In casual second-class did e'er
By casual youth her seat assume;
Or vestal, say, of saintliest clay,
For once by balmiest airs betrayed
Unto emotions too, too sweet
To be unlingeringly gainsaid.

Unowning then, confusing soon
With dreamier dreams that o'er the glass
Of shyly ripening woman-sense
Reflected, scarce reflected, pass —
A wife may be, a mother, she
In Hymen's shrine recalls not now
She first — in hour, ah, not profane! —
With me to Hymen learnt to bow.

Ah no! — yet owned we, fused in one,
The power which, e'en in stones and earths
By blind elections felt, in forms
Organic breeds to myriad births;
By lichen small on granite wall
Approved, its faintest, feeblest stir
Slow-spreading, strengthening long, at last
Vibrated full in me and her.

In me and her —— sensation strange!
The lily grew to pendent head;
To vernal airs the mossy bank
Its sheeny primrose spangles spread;
In roof o'er roof of shade sun-proof
Did cedar strong itself outclimb;
And altitude of aloe proud
Aspire in floral crown sublime;

Flashed flickering forth fantastic flies;
Big bees their burly bodies swung;
Rooks roused with civic din the elms;
And lark its wild reveillé rung;
In Libyan dell the light gazelle,
The leopard lithe in Indian glade,
And dolphin, brightening tropic seas,
In us were living, leapt and played.

Their shells did slow crustacea build;
Their gilded skins did snakes renew;
While mightier spines for loftier kind
Their types in amplest limbs outgrew;
Yea, close comprest in human breast,
What moss, and tree, and livelier thing —

What Earth, Sun, Star, of force possest,
Lay budding, burgeoning forth for spring!

Such sweet preluding sense, of old
Led on in Eden's sinless place
The hour when bodies human first
Combined the primal, prime embrace;
Such genial heat the blissful seat
In man and woman owned unblamed,
When, naked both, its garden paths
They walked unconscious, unashamed;

Ere, clouded yet in mightiest dawn,
Above the horizon dusk and dun,
One mountain crest with light had tipped
That orb that is the spirit's sun;
Ere dreamed young flowers in vernal showers
Of fruit to rise the flower above,
Or ever yet to young Desire
Was told the mystic name of love.

HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

ADDRESS TO CERTAIN GOLD-FISHES.

Restless forms of living light
Quivering on your lucid wings,
Cheating still the curious sight
With a thousand shadowings;
Various as the tints of even,
Gorgeous as the hues of heaven,
Reflected on your native streams
In flitting, flashing, billowy gleams!
Harmless warriors, clad in mail
Of silver breastplate, golden scale;—
Mail of Nature's own bestowing,
With peaceful radiance mildly glowing—
Fleet are ye as fleetest galley
Or pirate rover sent from Sallee;
Keener than the Tartar's arrow,
Sport ye in your sea so narrow.

Was the sun himself your sire?
Were ye born of vital fire?
Or of the shade of golden flowers,
Such as we fetch from Eastern bowers,
To mock this murky clime of ours?
Upwards, downwards, now ye glance,
Weaving many a mazy dance;
Seeming still to grow in size
When ye would elude our eyes—
Pretty creatures! we might deem
Ye were happy as ye seem—
As gay, as gamesome, and as blithe,
As light, as loving, and as lithe,
As gladly earnest in your play,
As when ye gleamed in far Cathay.

And yet, since on this hapless earth
There's small sincerity in mirth,
And laughter oft is but an art
To drown the outcry of the heart;
It may be that your ceaseless gambols,
Your wheelings, dartings, divings, rambles,
Your restless roving round and round,
The circuit of your crystal bound—
Is but the task of weary pain,
An endless labor, dull and vain;
And while your forms are gaily shining,
Your little lives are inly pining!
Nay—but still I fain would dream
That ye are happy as ye seem.

THE FLIGHT OF YOUTH.

Youth, thou art fled,—but where are all the charms
Which, though with thee they came, and passed with thee,
Should leave a perfume and sweet memory

Of what they have been? All thy boons and harms
Have perished quite. Thy oft-revered alarms
Forsake the fluttering echo. Smiles and tears
Die on my cheek, or, petrified with years,
Show the dull woe which no compassion warms,
The mirth none shares. Yet could a wish, a thought,
Unravel all the complex web of age, —
Could all the characters that Time hath wrought
Be clean effaced from my memorial page
By one short word, the word I would not say; —
I thank my God because my hairs are gray.

NOVEMBER.

The mellow year is hasting to its close;
The little birds have almost sung their last,
Their small notes twitter in the dreary blast —
That shrill-piped harbinger of early snows; —
The patient beauty of the scentless rose,
Oft with the morn's hoar crystal quaintly glassed,
Hangs a pale mourner for the summer past,
And makes a little summer where it grows; —
In the chill sunbeam of the faint brief day
The dusky waters shudder as they shine;
The russet leaves obstruct the straggling way
Of oozy brooks, which no deep banks define,
And the gaunt woods, in ragged, scant array,
Wrap their old limbs with sombre ivy-twine.

NO LIFE VAIN.

Let me not deem that I was made in vain,
Or that my being was an accident,
Which fate, in working its sublime intent,
Not wished to be, to hinder would not deign.
Each drop uncounted in a storm of rain
Hath its own mission, and is duly sent
To its own leaf or blade, not idly spent
'Mid myriad dimples on the shipless main.
The very shadow of an insect's wing,
For which the violet cared not while it stayed,
Yet felt the lighter for its vanishing,
Proved that the sun was shining by its shade:
Then can a drop of the eternal spring,
Shadow of living lights, in vain be made?

SONG.

She is not fair to outward view,
  As many maidens be,
Her loveliness I never knew
  Until she smiled on me;
Oh, then I saw her eye was bright,
A well of love, a spring of light,

But now her looks are coy and cold,
  To mine they ne'er reply;
And yet I cease not to behold
  The lovelight in her eye,
Her very frowns are fairer far
Than smiles of other maidens are.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

[*Passages from The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.*]

THE SHIP BECALMED.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea,

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

THE ANCIENT MARINER REFRESHED BY SLEEP AND RAIN.

O sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from heaven,
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke it rained.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank.
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light — almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

THE VOICES OF THE ANGELS.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

PENANCE OF THE ANCIENT MARINER, AND HIS REVERENT TEACHING.

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale:
And then it left me free.

Since then at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bridemaids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemèd there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk,
With a goodly company!

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends
And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee,thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

[*From Christabel.*]

BROKEN FRIENDSHIPS.

Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline.
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother:
They parted — ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining —
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder
A dreary sea now flows between; —
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

[*From The Three Graves.*]

BELL AND BROOK.

'Tis sweet to hear a brook, 'tis sweet
To hear the Sabbath-bell,
'Tis sweet to hear them both at once,
Deep in a woody dell.

[*From Dejection.*]

. . . . . .

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear —
O lady! in this wan and heartless mood,

To other thoughts by yonder throstle wooed,
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its pecular tint of yellow green:
And still I gaze — and with how blank an eye!
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars;
Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen:
Yon crescent moon as fixed as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel how beautiful they are!

My genial spirits fail;
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavor,
Though I should gaze forever
On that green light that lingers in the west:
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live:
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless, ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth,
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the earth —
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be!
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.
Joy, virtuous lady, — joy that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life, and life's effluence, cloud at once and shower
Joy, lady, is the spirit and the power,
Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower.
A new earth and new heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud —
Joy is the sweet voice, joy the luminous cloud —
We in ourselves rejoice!
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colors a suffusion from that light.

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness:
For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.
But now afflictions bow me down to earth:
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth,
But oh! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,

My shaping spirit of imagination.
For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man —
This was my sole resource, my only plan:
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream!
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,

. . . . .

Thou actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
Thou mighty poet, e'en to frenzy bold!
What tell'st thou now about?
'Tis of the rushing of a host in rout,
With groans of trampled men, with smarting wounds —
At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the cold!
But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!
And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
With groans, and tremulous shudderings — all is over —
It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud!
A tale of less affright,
And tempered with delight,
As Otway's self had framed the tender lay,
'Tis of a little child
Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way:
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother hear.

. . . .

HYMN BEFORE SUNRISE IN THE VALLEY OF CHAMOUNI.

HAST thou a charm to stay the morning-star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arvé and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,
As with a wedge! But when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
Yea, with my life, and life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating soul, enwrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing — there
As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,

Voice of sweet song. Awake, my heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the vale!
Oh, struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky or when they sink:
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
Thyself earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, oh, wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in earth?
Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged rocks,
For ever shattered and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence came,)
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain —
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet? —
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
God! sing ye meadow-streams, with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!
Ye signs and wonders of the elements!
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou too, hoar mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy breast —
Thou too again, stupendous mountain! thou
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapory cloud,
To rise before me — Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense, from the earth!

Thou kingly spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

LOVE, HOPE AND PATIENCE IN EDUCATION.

O'ER wayward childhood would'st thou hold firm rule,
And sun thee in the light of happy faces;
Love, Hope, and Patience, these must be thy graces,
And in thine own heart let them first keep school,

. . . . .

O part them never! If hope prostrate lie,
Love too will sink and die.
But Love is subtle, and doth proof derive
From her own life that Hope is yet alive;
And bending o'er with soul-transfusing eyes,
And the soft murmurs of the mother dove,
Woos back the fleeting spirit and half-supplies;—
Thus Love repays to Hope what Hope first gave to Love.
Yet haply there will come a weary day
When overtasked at length
Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way.
Then with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth,
And both supporting, does the work of both.

YOUTH AND AGE.

VERSE, a breeze, mid blossoms straying,
Where hope clung fading, like a bee—
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
When I was young?—Ah, woful when!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly then it flashed along:—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O! the joys, that came down shower like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old.
Ere I was old? Ah, woful ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known, that thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be, that thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet tolled:—
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To make believe, that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!

Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old:
That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismist.
Yet hath outstayed his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

COMPLAINT AND REPROOF.

How seldom, friend! a good great man inherits
Honor or wealth, with all his worth and pains!
It sounds like stories from the land of spirits,
If any man obtain that which he merits,
Or any merit that which he obtains.

For shame, dear friend! renounce this canting strain!
What wouldst thou have a good great man obtain?
Place, titles, salary — a gilded chain —
Or throne of corses which his sword hath slain? —
Greatness and goodness are not means, but ends!
Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
The good great man? — three treasures, love and light,
And calm thoughts, regular as infant's breath: —
And three firm friends, more sure than day and night —
Himself, his Maker, and the angel Death.

LOVE.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She leaned against the armèd man,
The statue of the armed knight;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own.
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story —
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The lady of the land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night:

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright;
And that he knew it was a fiend,
This miserable knight!

And that unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The lady of the land;—

And how she wept, and clasped his knees;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay;—

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love and virgin shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she steppe aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous bride.

THOMAS STEPHENS COLLIER.

OFF LABRADOR.

The storm-wind moans through branches bare;
The snow flies wildly through the air;
The mad waves roar, as fierce and high
oss their crests against the sky.

All dark and desolate lies the sand
Along the wastes of a barren land;
And rushing on, with sheets flung free,
A ship sails down from the northern sea.

With lips pressed hard the helmsman stands,
Grasping the spokes with freezing hands,
While white the reef lies in his path,
Swept by an ocean full of wrath.

The surf-roar in the blast is lost,
The foam-flakes by the wild wind tost
High up in air, no warning show,
Hid by the driving mass of snow.

With sudden bound and sullen grate,
The brave ship rushes to her fate,
And splintered deck and broken mast
Make homage to the roaring blast.

Amid the waves, float riven plank,
And rope and sail with moisture dank;
And faces gleaming stern and white
Shine dimly in the storm-filled night.

By some bright river far away,
Fond hearts are wondering where they stay
Who sleep along the wave-washed shore
And stormy reefs of Labrador.

AN OCTOBER PICTURE.

The purple grapes hang ready for the kiss
Of red lips sweeter than their wine;
And 'mid the turning leaves they soon will miss,
The crimson apples shine.
Lazily through the soft and sunlit air
The great hawks fly, and give no heed
To the sweet songsters, that toward the fair,
Far lands of summer speed.

Along the hills wild asters bend to greet
The roadside's wealth of golden-rod;
And by the fences the bright sumachs meet
The morning light of God.

Slowly the shadows of the clouds drift o'er
The hillsides, clad in opal haze,
Where gorgeous butterflies seek the rich store
Of flower-sprent summer days.

All clad in dusted gold, the tall elms stand
Just in the edges of the wood;
And near, the chestnut sentinels the land,
And shows its russet hood.

The maple flaunts its scarlet banners where
The marsh lies clad in shining mist;
The mountain oak shows, in the clear, bright air,
Its crown of amethyst.

Where, like a silver line, the sparkling stream
Flows murmuring through the meadows brown,
Amid the radiance, seeming a sad dream,
A sailless boat floats down.

. . . .

COMPLETE.

Like morning blooms that meet the sun
With all the fragrant freshness won
From night's repose, and kiss of dew
Which the bright radiance glistens through,
Such is the sweetness of thy lips,
Where love its sacred tribute sips:
Such is the glory of thine eyes,
Rich with the soul's unsaid replies.

. . . . .

The snow that crowns the mountain height,
Through countless years of gleaming white;
The creamy blooms of orchard trees,
Full of the melody of bees;
The cool, fresh sweetness of the sea;
All have a charm possessed by thee:
But each of these has one alone,
Whilst thou canst call them all thine own.

MORTIMER COLLINS.

IN VIEW OF DEATH.

No; I shall pass into the Morning Land
As now from sleep into the life of morn;
Live the new life of the new world, unshorn
Of the swift brain, the executing hand;
See the dense darkness suddenly withdrawn,
As when Orion's sightless eyes discerned the dawn.

I shall behold it; I shall see the utter
Glory of sunrise heretofore unseen,
Freshening the woodland ways with brighter green,
And calling into life all wings that flutter,
All throats of music and all eyes of light,
And driving o'er the verge the intolerable night.

O virgin world! O marvellous far days!
No more with dreams of grief doth love grow bitter,
Nor trouble dim the lustre wont to glitter
In happy eyes. Decay alone decays:
A moment — death's dull sleep is o'er; and we
Drink the immortal morning air Eärine.

LAST VERSES.

I HAVE been sitting alone
All day while the clouds went by,
While moved the strength of the seas,
While a wind with a will of his own,
A poet out of the sky,
Smote the green harp of the trees.

Alone, yet not alone,
For I felt, as the gay wind whirled,
As the cloudy sky grew clear,
The touch of our Father half-known,
Who dwells at the heart of the world,
Yet who is always here.

WILLIAM COLLINS.

ODE TO SIMPLICITY.

O THOU, by Nature taught
To breathe her genuine thought,
In numbers warmly pure, and sweetly strong;
Who first, on mountains wild,
In Fancy, loveliest child,
Thy babe, or Pleasure's, nursed the powers of song!

Thou, who, with hermit heart,
Disdain'st the wealth of art.
And gauds, and pageant weeds, and trailing pall;
But com'st a decent maid,
In Attic robe arrayed,
O chaste, unboastful nymph, to thee I call!

. . . .

O sister meek of Truth,
To my admiring youth,
Thy sober aid and native charms infuse!
The flowers that sweetest breathe,
Though Beauty culled the wreath,
Still ask thy hand to range their ordered hues.

. . . .

Though taste, though genius, bless,
To some divine excess,
Faints the cold work till thou inspire the whole;
What each, what all supply,
May court, may charm, our eye;
Thou, only thou, canst raise the meeting soul!

Of these let others ask,
To aid some mighty task,
I only seek to find thy temperate vale;
Where oft my reed might sound
To maids and shepherds round,
And all thy sons, O Nature, learn my tale.

ODE TO THE BRAVE.

How sleep the brave, who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blessed!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould.
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honor comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And Freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell, a weeping hermit, there!

ON TRUE AND FALSE TASTE IN MUSIC.

DISCARD soft nonsense in a slavish tongue,
The strain insipid, and the thought unknown;
From truth and nature form the unerring test;
Be what is manly, chaste, and good the best!
'Tis not to ape the songsters of the groves,
Through all the quivers of their wanton loves;
'Tis not the enfeebled thrill, or warbled shake,
The heart can strengthen, or the soul awake!
But where the force of energy is found,
When the sense rises on the wings of sound;
When reason, with the charms of music twined,
Through the enraptured ear informs the mind;
Bids generous love or soft compassion glow,
And forms a tuneful Paradise below!

THE PASSIONS.

AN ODE FOR MUSIC.

WHEN Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Thronged around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's painting:
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturbed, delighted, raised, refined:
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Filled with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatched her instruments of sound:
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for Madness ruled the hour)
Would prove his own expressive power.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewildered laid,
And back recoiled, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rushed; his eyes on fire,
In lightnings owned his secret stings;
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hands the strings.

With woful measures wan Despair
Low, sullen sounds his grief beguiled;
A solemn, strange, and mingled air;
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild!

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure?
Still it whispered promised pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong;
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She called on Echo still, through all the song;
And where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden hair.
And longer had she sung; — but with a frown.
Revenge impatient rose;
He threw his blood-stained sword, in thunder, down;
And with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe!
And, ever and anon, he beat
The doubling drum, with furious heat;
And though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity, at his side,
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unaltered mien,
While each strained ball of sight seemed bursting from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fixed;
Sad proof of thy distressful state;
Of differing themes the veering song was mixed;
And now it courted Love, now raving called on Hate.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sate retired;
And, from her wild sequestered seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Poured through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
And, dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels joined the sound;
Through glades and glooms the mingled measures stole,
Or, o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of Peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But O! how altered was its sprightlier tone,
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulder flung,
Her buskins gemmed with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call, to Faun and Dryad known!
The oak-crowned Sisters, and their chaste-eyed Queen,
Satyrs and sylvan boys were seen,
Peeping from forth their alleys green:
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear;
And Sport leapt up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial:
He, with viny crown advancing.
First to the lively pipe his hand addrest;
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best;
They would have thought who heard the strain
They saw, in Tempe's vale, her native maids,
Amidst the festal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
While, as his flying fingers kissed the strings,

Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round;
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odors from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
Why, goddess! why, to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As, in that loved Athenian bower,
You learned an all-commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O Nymph endeared,
Can well recall what then it heard;
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders, in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording sister's page —
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age;
E'en all at once together found,
Cecilia's mingled world of sound —
O bid our vain endeavors cease;
Revive the just designs of Greece:
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

ODE TO EVENING.

If aught of oaten stop or pastoral song,
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
Like thy own brawling springs,
Thy springs and dying gales;

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing;
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy darkening vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit;
As, musing slow, I hail
Thy genial loved return!

For when thy folding-star, arising shows
His paly circlet,—at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the freshening dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene;
Or find some ruin, 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.

Or, if chill blustering winds, or driving rain
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That, from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires;
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes;

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science. smiling Peace,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And love thy favorite name!

ODE ON THE DEATH OF THOMSON.

[The scene is supposed to lie on the Thames, near Richmond.]

In yonder grave a Druid lies.
Where slowly winds the stealing wave;
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise
To deck its poet's sylvan grave.

In yon deep bed of whispering reeds
His airy harp shall now be laid,
That he, whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
May love through life the soothing shade.

Then maids and youths shall linger here,
And while its sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem in Pity's ear
To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
When Thames in summer wreaths is drest,
And oft suspend the dashing oar,
To bid his gentle spirit rest!

And oft, as Ease and Health retire
To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
The friend shall view yon whitening spire
And 'mid the varied landscape weep.

But thou, who own'st that earthly bed,
Ah! what will every dirge avail;
Or tears, which Love and Pity shed,
That mourn beneath the gliding sail?

Yet lives there one whose heedless eye
Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimmering near?
With him, sweet bard, may Fancy die,
And Joy desert the blooming year.

But thou, lorn stream, whose sullen tide
No sedge-crowned sisters now attend,
Now waft me from the green hill's side,
Whose cold turf hides the buried friend!

And see, the fairy valleys fade;
Dun night has veiled the solemn view!
Yet once again, dear parted shade,
Meek Nature's child, again adieu!

The genial meads, assigned to bless
Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom;
Their hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress,
With simple hands, thy rural tomb.

Long, long, thy stone and pointed clay
Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes:
"O vales and wild woods!" shall he say,
"In yonder grave your Druid lies!"

ELIZA COOK.

SONG OF THE HEMPSEED.

AY, scatter me well, 'tis a moist spring day;
Wide and far be the hempseed sown:
And bravely I'll stand on the autumn land,
When the rains have dropped and the winds have blown
Man shall carefully gather me up;
His hand shall rule and my form shall change;
Not as a mate for the purple of state,
Nor into aught that is "rich and strange."
But I will come forth all woven and spun,
With my fine threads curled in serpent length;
And the fire-wrought chain and the lion's thick mane
Shall be rivalled by me in mighty strength.
I have many a place in the busy world,
Of triumph and fear, of sorrow and joy;
I carry the freeman's flag unfurled;
I am linked to childhood's darling toy.
Then scatter me wide, and hackle me well;
For a varied tale can the hempseed tell.

Bravely I swing in the anchor-ring,
Where the foot of the proud man cometh not;
Where the dolphin leaps and the seaweed creeps
O'er the rifted sand and the coral grot.
Down, down below I merrily go
When the huge ship takes her rocking rest:
The waters may chafe, but she dwelleth as safe
As the young bird in its woodland nest.
I wreathe the spars of that same fair ship,
Where the gallant sea-hearts cling about:
Springing aloft with a song on the lip,
Putting their faith in the cordage stout,
I am true when the blast sways the giant mast,
Straining and stretched in a nor'-west gale,
I abide with the bark, in the day and the dark,
Lashing the hammock and reefing the sail.
Oh! the billows and I right fairly cope,
And the wild tide is stemmed by the cable rope.

. . . . .

The sunshine falls on a new-made grave, —
The funeral train is long and sad;
The poor man has come to the happiest home
And easiest pillow he ever had.
I shall be there to lower him down
Gently into his narrow bed;
I shall be there, the work to share,
To guard his feet, and cradle his head.

. . . . .

Oh! the hempseed cometh in doleful shape,
With the mourner's cloak and sable crape.

Harvest shall spread with its glittering wheat,
The barn shall be opened, the stack shall be piled;
Ye shall see the ripe grain shining out from the wain,
And the berry-stained arms of the gleaner-child.
Heap on, heap on, till the wagon ribs creak,
Let the sheaves go towering to the sky;
Up with the shock till the broad wheels rock,
Fear not to carry the rich freight high;
For I will infold the tottering gold,
I will fetter the rolling load;

Not an ear shall escape my binding hold,
On the furrowed field or jolting road.
Oh! the hempseed hath a fair place to fill,
With the harvest band on the corn-crowned hill.

. . . . .

AFTER A MOTHER'S DEATH.

They told me in my earlier years,
Life was a dark and tangled web;
A gloomy sea of bitter tears,
Where Sorrow's influx had no ebb.

But such was vainly taught and said,
My laugh rang out with joyous tone;
The woof possessed one brilliant thread
Of rainbow colors, all my own.

. . . . .

I boasted — till a mother's grave
Was heaped and sodded — then I found
The sunshine stricken from the wave,
And all the golden thread unwound.

. . . . .

Preach on who will — say "Life is sad,"
I'll not refute as once I did;
You'll find the eye that beamed so glad,
Will hide a tear beneath its lid.

Preach on of woe; the time *hath* been
I'd praise the world with shadeless brow:
The dream is broken — I have seen
A mother die: — I'm silent now.

GANGING TO *AND GANGING* FRAE.

Nae star was glintin out aboon,
The cluds were dark and hid the moon;
The whistling gale was in my teeth,
And round me was the deep snaw wreath;
But on I went the dreary mile,
And sung right cantie a' the while
I gae my plaid a closer fauld;
My hand was warm, my heart was bauld,
I didna heed the storm and cauld,
While ganging *to* my Katie.

But when I trod the same way back,
It seemed a sad and waefu' track;
The brae and glen were lone and lang;
I didna sing my cantie sang;
I felt how sharp the sleet did fa',
And couldna face the wind at a'.
Oh, sic a change! how could it be?
I ken fu' well, and sae may ye —
The sunshine had been gloom to me
While ganging *frae* my Katie.

MY OLD STRAW HAT.

Farewell, old friend, — we part at last;
Fruits, flowers, and summer, all are past,
And when the beech-leaves bid adieu,
My old straw hat must vanish too.
We've been together many an hour,
In grassy dell and garden bower;
And plait and riband, scorched and torn,
Proclaim how well thou hast been worn.
We've had a time, gay, bright, and long;
So let me sing a grateful song, —
And if one bay-leaf falls to me,
I'll stick it firm and fast in thee,
My old straw hat.

Thy flapping shade and flying strings
Are worth a thousand close-tied things.
I love thy easy-fitting crown,
Thrust lightly back, or slouching down.
I cannot brook a muffled ear,
When lark and blackbird whistle near;
And dearly like to meet and seek
The fresh wind with unguarded cheek.

Tossed in a tree, thou'lt bear no harm;
Flung on the moss, thou'lt lose no charm;
Like many a real friend on earth,
Rough usage only proves thy worth.
My old straw hat.

. . . . .

Farewell, old friend, thy work is done;
The misty clouds shut out the sun;
The grapes are plucked, the hops are off,
The woods are stark, and I must doff
My old straw hat — but "bide a wee,"
Fair skies we've seen, yet we may see
Skies full as fair as those of yore,
And then we'll wander forth once more.
Farewell, till drooping bluebells blow,
And violets stud the warm hedgerow,
Farewell, till daisies deck the plain —
Farewell, till spring days come again —
My old straw hat.

SONG OF THE UGLY MAIDEN.

Oh! the world gives little of love or light,
Though my spirit pants for much;
For I have no beauty for the sight,
No riches for the touch.
I hear men sing o'er the flowing cup
Of woman's magic spell;
And vows of zeal they offer up,
And eloquent tales they tell.
They bravely swear to guard the fair
With strong protecting arms;
But will they worship woman's worth
Unblent with woman's charms?
No! ah, no! 'tis little they prize
Crook-backed forms and rayless eyes.

Oh! 'tis a saddening thing to be
A poor and ugly one:
In the sand Time puts in his glass for me,
Few golden atoms run.
For my drawn lids bear no shadowing fringe;
My locks are thin and dry;
My teeth wear not the rich pearl tinge,
Nor my lips the henna dye.
I know full well I have nought of grace
That maketh woman "divine;"
The wooer's praise and doting gaze
Have never yet been mine.
Where'er I go all eyes will shun
The loveless mien of the ugly one.

. . . . .

Would that I had passed away
Ere I knew that I was born;
For I stand in the blessed light of day
Like a weed among the corn, —
The black rock in the wide blue sea, —
The snake in the jungle green:
Oh! who will stay in the fearful way
Where such ugly things are seen?
Yet mine is the fate of lonelier state
Than that of the snake or rock;
For those who behold me in their path
Not only shun, but mock.
O Ugliness! thy desolate pain
Had served to set the stamp on Cain'

PHILIP PENDLETON COOKE.

FLORENCE VANE.

I LOVED thee long and dearly,
Florence Vane;
My life's bright dream and early
Hath come again;
I renew, in my fond vision,
My heart's dear pain —
My hopes, and thy derision,
Florence Vane.

The ruin, lone and hoary,
The ruin old
Where thou didst hark my story,
At even told —
That spot — the hues Elysian
Of sky and plain —
I treasure in my vision,
Florence Vane.

Thou wast lovelier than the roses
In their prime;
Thy voice excelled the closes
Of sweetest rhyme;
Thy heart was as a river
Without a main.
Would I had loved thee never,
Florence Vane.

But, fairest, coldest wonder!
Thy glorious clay
Lieth the green sod under —
Alas, the day!

And it boots not to remember
Thy disdain,
To quicken love's pale ember,
Florence Vane.

The lilies of the valley
By young graves weep;
The daisies love to dally
Where maidens sleep.
May their bloom, in beauty vying,
Never wane
Where thine earthly part is lying,
Florence Vane!

ROSE TERRY COOKE.

THE ICONOCLAST.

A thousand years shall come and go,
A thousand years of night and day;
And man, through all their changing show,
His tragic drama still shall play.

Ruled by some fond ideal's power,
Cheated by passion or despair,
Still shall he waste life's trembling hour,
In worship vain, and useless prayer.

Ah! where are they who rose in might,
Who fired the temple and the shrine,
And hurled, through earth's chaotic night,
The helpless gods it deemed divine?

Cease, longing soul, thy vain desire!
What idol, in its stainless prime,
But falls, untouched of axe or fire,
Before the steady eyes of Time?

He looks, and lo! our altars fall,
The shrine reveals its gilded clay,
With decent hands we spread the pall,
And cold, with wisdom, glide away.

O, where were courage, faith, and truth,
If man went wandering all his day
In golden clouds of love and youth,
Nor knew that both his steps betray?

Come, Time, while here we sit and wait,
Be faithful, spoiler, to thy trust!
No death can further desolate
The soul that knows its god was dust.

TRAILING ARBUTUS.

Darlings of the forest!
Blossoming, alone,
When Earth's grief is sorest
For her jewels gone —
Ere the last snow-drift melts, your tender buds have blown.

Tinged with color faintly,
Like the morning sky,
Or, more pale and saintly,
Wrapped in leaves ye lie —
Even as children sleep in faith's simplicity.

There the wild wood-robin,
Hymns your solitude;

And the rain comes sobbing
Through the budding wood,
While the low south wind sighs, but dare not be more rude.

Were your pure lips fashioned
Out of air and dew —
Starlight unimpassioned,
Dawn's most tender hue,
And scented by the woods that gathered sweets for you?

Fairest and most lonely,
From the world apart;
Made for beauty only,
Veiled from Nature's heart
With such unconscious grace as makes the dream of Art!

Were not mortal sorrow
An immortal shade,
Then would I to-morrow
Such a flower be made,
And live in the dear woods where my lost childhood played.

THEN.

I GIVE thee treasures hour by hour,
That old-time princes asked in vain,
And pined for, in their useless power,
Or died of passion's eager pain.

I give thee love as God gives light,
Aside from merit, or from prayer,
Rejoicing in its own delight,
And freer than the lavish air.

I give thee prayers, like jewels strung
On golden threads of hope and fear;
And tenderer thoughts than ever hung
In a sad angel's pitying tear.

As earth pours freely to the sea
Her thousand streams of wealth untold,
So flows my silent life to thee,
Glad that its very sands are gold.

What care I for thy carelessness?
I give from depths that overflow,
Regardless that their power to bless
Thy spirit cannot sound or know.

Far lingering on a distant dawn
My triumph shines, more sweet than late;
When from these mortal mists withdrawn,
Thy heart shall know me — I can wait.

INA D. COOLBRITH.

IN BLOSSOM TIME.

IT'S O my heart, my heart,
To be out in the sun and sing!
To sing and shout in the fields about,
In the balm and the blossoming.

Sing loud, O bird in the tree;
O bird, sing loud in the sky,
And honey-bees, blacken the clover bed —
There are none of you glad as I.

The leaves laugh low in the wind,
Laugh low, with the wind at play;
And the odorous call of the flowers all
Entices my soul away!

For oh, but the world is fair, is fair —
And oh, but the world is sweet!
I will out in the gold of the blossoming mould,
And sit at the Master's feet.

And the love my heart would speak
I will fold in the lily's rim,
That the lips of the blossoms, more pure and meek,
May offer it up to Him.

Then sing in the hedgerow green, O thrush,
O skylark, sing in the blue:
Sing loud, sing clear, that the King may hear,
And my soul shall sing with you!

THE MOTHER'S GRIEF.

So fair the sun rose yestermorn,
The mountain cliffs adorning;
The golden tassels of the corn
Danced in the breath of morning;
The cool, clear stream that runs before,
Such happy words was saying,
And in the open cottage door
My pretty babe was playing.
Aslant the sill a sunbeam lay:
I laughed in careless pleasure,
To see his little hand essay
To grasp the shining treasure.

To-day no shafts of golden flame
Across the sill are lying;
To-day I call my baby's name,
And hear no lisped replying;
To-day — ah, baby mine, to-day —
God holds thee in his keeping!
And yet I weep, as one pale ray
Breaks in upon thy sleeping —
I weep to see its shining bands
Reach, with a fond endeavor,
To where the little restless hands
Are crossed in rest forever!

CHARLES COTTON.

[*From Retirement.*]

IN THE QUIET OF NATURE.

Farewell, thou busy world, and may
We never meet again;
Here I can eat, and sleep, and pray,
And do more good in one short day,
Than he who his whole age outwears
Upon the most conspicuous theatres,
Where nought but vanity and vice appears.

Good God! how sweet are all things here!
How beautiful the fields appear!
How cleanly do we feed and lie!
Lord! what good hours do we keep!
How quietly we sleep!
What peace, what unanimity!
How innocent from the lewd fashion,
Is all our business, all our recreation!

. . . . . .

Dear solitude, the soul's best friend,
That man acquainted with himself dost make,
And all his Maker's wonders to intend,
With thee I here converse at will,
And would be glad to do so still,
For it is thou alone that keep'st the soul awake.

How calm and quiet a delight
Is it, alone
To read, and meditate, and write,
By none offended, and offending none!
To walk, ride, sit, or sleep at one's own ease;
And, pleasing a man's self, none other to displease.

. . . . .

CONTENTATION.

I can go nowhere but I meet
With malcontents and mutineers,
As if in life was nothing sweet,
And we must blessings reap in tears.

. . . . .

Titles and wealth are fortune's toils,
Wherewith the vain themselves ensnare:
The great are proud of borrowed spoils,
The miser's plenty breeds his care.

. . . . .

The drudge who would all get, all save,
Like a brute beast, both feeds and lies;
Prone to the earth, he digs his grave,
And in the very labor dies.

Excess of ill-got, ill-kept pelf
Does only death and danger breed;
Whilst one rich worldling starves himself
With what would thousand others feed.

. . . . .

Nor is he happier than these,
Who, in a moderate estate,
Where he might safely live at ease,
Has lusts that are immoderate.

. . . . .

Nor is he happy who is trim,
Tricked up in favors of the fair,
Mirrors, with every breath made dim,
Birds, caught in every wanton snare.

Woman, man's greatest woe or bliss,
Does oftener far than serve, enslave;
And with the magic of a kiss
Destroys whom she was made to save.

. . . . .

There are no ills but what we make
By giving shapes and names to things,—
Which is the dangerous mistake
That causes all our sufferings.

We call that sickness which is health,
That persecution which is grace,
That poverty which is true wealth,
And that dishonor which is praise.

Alas! our time is here so short
That in what state soe'er 't is spent,
Of joy or woe, does not import,
Provided it be innocent.

But we may make it pleasant too,
If we will take our measures right,
And not what heaven has done undo
By an unruly appetite.

The world is full of beaten roads,
But yet so slippery withal,
That where one walks secure, 't is odds
A hundred and a hundred fall.

Untrodden paths are then the best,
Where the frequented are unsure;
And he comes soonest to his rest
Whose journey has been most secure.

It is content alone that makes
Our pilgrimage a pleasure here;
And who buys sorrow cheapest takes
An ill commodity too dear.

ABRAHAM COWLEY.

OF MYSELF.

This only grant me, that my means may lie
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
Some honor I would have,
Not from great deeds, but good alone:
The unknown are better than ill known:
Rumor can ope the grave.
Acquaintance I would have, but when't depends
Not on the number, but the choice, of friends.

Books should, not business, entertain the light,
And sleep as undisturbed as death, the night.
My house a cottage more

Than palace; and should fitting be
For all my use, no luxury.
My garden painted o'er
With Nature's hand, not Art's; and pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

Thus would I double my life's fading space;
For he that runs it well twice runs his race.
And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, this happy state,
I would not fear, nor wish, my fate;
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
Or in clouds hide them; I have lived to-day.

ON THE SHORTNESS OF LIFE.

Mark that swift arrow, how it cuts the air,
How it outruns thy following eye!
Use all persuasions now, and try
If thou canst call it back or stay it there,
That way it went; but thou shalt find
No track is left behind.

Fool! 'tis thy life, and the fond archer, thou!
Of all the time thou'st shot away,
I'll bid thee fetch but yesterday,
And it shall be too hard a task to do.
Beside repentance, what canst find
That it hath left behind?

. . . . .

But his past life, who without grief can see,
Who never thinks his end too near,
But says to Fame, Thou art mine heir,—
That man extends life's natural brevity:
This is, this is the only way
To outlive Nestor in a day.

[*From Reason.*]

REASON AN AID TO REVELATION.

Though Reason cannot through Faith's mysteries see,
It sees that there and such there be,
Leads to heaven's door, and then does humbly keep,
And then through chinks and keyholes peep.
Though it, like Moses, by a sad command
Must not come into the Holy Land,
Yet thither it infallibly does guide,
And from afar 'tis all descried.

[*From Friendship in Absence.*]

DISTANCE NO BARRIER TO THE SOUL.

When chance or cruel business parts us two,
What do our souls, I wonder, do?
Whilst sleep does our dull bodies tie,
Methinks at home they should not stay
Content with dreams,—but boldly fly
Abroad, and meet each other half the way.

. . . . .

'T were an ill world, I'll swear, for every friend,
If distance could their union end:
But love itself does far advance
Above the power of time and space,
It scorns such outward circumstance,
His time 's forever, everywhere, his place.

WILLIAM COWPER.

LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS.

GOD moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain:
God is His own interpreter.
And He will make it plain.

THE POPLAR FIELD.

THE poplars are felled; farewell to the shade,
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade!
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view
Of my favorite field, and the bank where they grew;
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade!

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,
And the scene where his melody charmed me before
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can,
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man;
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,
Have a being less durable even than he.

[*From The Task.*]

APOSTROPHE TO POPULAR APPLAUSE.

O POPULAR applause! what heart of man
Is proof against thy sweet seducing charms?
The wisest and the best feel urgent need
Of all their caution in thy gentlest gales;
But swelled into a gust — who then, alas!

With all his canvas set, and inexpert,
And therefore heedless, can withstand thy power?
Praise from the rivelled lips of toothless, bald
Decrepitude, and in the looks of lean
And craving poverty, and in the bow
Respectful of the smutched artificer,
Is oft too welcome, and may much disturb
The bias of the purpose. How much more
Poured forth by beauty splendid and polite,
In language soft as adoration breathes?
Ah, spare your idol! think him human still;
Charms he may have, but he has frailties too;
Dote not too much, nor spoil what ye admire.

[*From The Task.*]

THE FREEDOM OF THE GOOD.

He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside. There's not a chain
That hellish foes confederate for his harm
Can wind around him, but he casts it off
With as much ease as Samson his green withes.
He looks abroad into the varied field
Of nature, and though poor perhaps, compared
With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,
Calls the delightful scenery all his own.
His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
And the resplendent rivers.

. . . . .

Yes—ye may fill your garners, ye that reap
The loaded soil, and ye may waste much good
In senseless riot; but ye will not find
In feast or in the chase, in song or dance,
A liberty like his, who unimpeached
Of usurpation, and to no man's wrong,
Appropriates nature as his Father's work,
And has a richer use of yours, than you.
He is indeed a freeman; free by birth
Of no mean city, planned or e'er the hills
Were built, the fountains opened, or the sea
With all his roaring multitude of waves.
His freedom is the same in every state;
And no condition of this changeful life,
So manifold in cares, whose every day
Brings its own evil with it, makes it less:
For he has wings that neither sickness, pain,
Nor penury can cripple or confine.
No nook so narrow but he spreads them there
With ease, and is at large. The oppressor holds
His body bound, but knows not what a range
His spirit takes, unconscious of a chain,
And that to bind him is a vain attempt
Whom God delights in, and in whom he dwells.

[*From The Task.*]

THE WINTER'S EVENING.

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And, while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,

That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.
Not such his evening, who with shining face
Sweats in the crowded theatre, and, squeezed
And bored with elbow-points through both his sides,
Outscolds the ranting actor on the stage:
Nor his, who patient stands till his feet throb,
And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
Of patriots, bursting with heroic rage,
Or placemen, all tranquillity and smiles.
This folio of four pages, happy work!
Which not even critics criticize; that holds
Inquisitive attention, while I read,
Fast bound in chains of silence, which the fair,
Though eloquent themselves, yet fear to break;
What is it but a map of busy life,
Its fluctuations, and its vast concerns?

. . . . .

'Tis pleasant, through the loopholes of retreat,
To peep at such a world; to see the stir
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd;
To hear the roar she sends through all her gates
At a safe distance, where the dying sound
Falls a soft murmur on the uninjured ear.
Thus sitting, and surveying thus at ease
The globe and its concerns, I seem advanced
To some secure and more than mortal height,
That liberates and exempts me from them all.
It turns submitted to my view, turns round
With all its generations; I behold
The tumult, and am still. The sound of war
Has lost its terrors ere it reaches me;
Grieves, but alarms me not. I mourn the pride
And avarice, that make man a wolf to man;
Hear the faint echo of those brazen throats,
By which he speaks the language of his heart,
And sigh, but never tremble at the sound.
He travels and expatiates, as the bee
From flower to flower, so he from land to land;
The manners, customs, policy, of all
Pay contribution to the store he gleans;
He sucks intelligence in every clime,
And spreads the honey of his deep research
At his return,—a rich repast for me.
He travels, and I too. I tread his deck,
Ascend his topmast, through his peering eyes
Discover countries, with a kindred heart
Suffer his woes, and share in his escapes;
While fancy, like the finger of a clock,
Runs the great circuit, and is still at home.

. . . . .

O winter, ruler of the inverted year,
Thy scattered hair with sleet like ashes filled,
Thy breath congealed upon thy lips, thy cheeks
Fringed with a beard made white with other snows
Than those of age, thy forehead wrapped in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
But urged by storms along its slippery way,
I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,
And dreaded as thou art! Thou hold'st the sun
A prisoner in the yet undawning east,

Shortening his journey between morn and noon,
And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,
Down to the rosy west; but kindly still
Compensating his loss with added hours
Of social converse and instructive ease,
And gathering at short notice, in one group
The family dispersed, and fixing thought,
Not less dispersed by daylight and its cares.
I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, homeborn happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturbed retirement, and the hours
Of long uninterrupted evening, know.
No rattling wheels stop short before these gates;
No powdered pert proficient in the art
Of sounding an alarm assaults these doors
Till the street rings; no stationary steeds
Cough their own knell, while, heedless of the sound,
The silent circle fan themselves, and quake:
But here the needle plies its busy task,
The pattern grows, the well-depicted flower,
Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,
Unfolds its bosom; buds, and leaves, and sprigs,
And curling tendrils, gracefully disposed,
Follow the nimble finger of the fair;
A wreath, that cannot fade, of flowers, that blow
With most success when all besides decay.
The poet's or historian's page by one
Made vocal for the amusement of the rest;
The sprightly lyre, whose treasure of sweet sounds
The touch from many a trembling chord shakes out;
And the clear voice symphonious, yet distinct,
And in the charming strife triumphant still,
Beguile the night, and set a keener edge
On female industry: the threaded steel
Flies swiftly, and unfelt the task proceeds.

[*From The Task.*]

MERCY TO ANIMALS.

I WOULD not enter on my list of friends,
(Though graced with polished manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility,) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.
An inadvertent step may crush the snail
That crawls at evening in the public path;
But he that has humanity, forewarned,
Will tread aside, and let the reptile live.
The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight,
And charged perhaps with venom, that intrudes,
A visitor unwelcome, into scenes
Sacred to neatness and repose, the alcove,
The chamber, or refectory, may die:
A necessary act incurs no blame.
Not so when, held within their proper bounds,
And guiltless of offence, they range the air
Or take their pastime in the spacious field.
There they are privileged; and he that hunts

Or harms them there is guilty of a wrong,
Disturbs the economy of Nature's realm,
Who, when she formed, designed them an abode.
The sum is this: If man's convenience, health,
Or safety interfere, his rights and claims
Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs.
Else they are all — the meanest things that are —
As free to live, and to enjoy that life,
As God was free to form them at the first,
Who in his sovereign wisdom made them all.
Ye, therefore, who love mercy, teach your sons
To love it too.

[*From The Task.*]

THE POST-BOY.

Hark! 'tis the twanging horn! o'er yonder bridge,
That with its wearisome but needless length
Bestrides the wintry flood; in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright: —
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spattered boots, strapped waist, and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumbering at his back.
True to his task, the close-packed load behind,
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn:
And having dropped the expected bag, pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful: messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some;
To him indifferent whether grief or joy.

[*From Retirement.*]

THE SOUL'S PROGRESS CHECKED BY TOO ABSORBING LOVE.

As woodbine weds the plant within her reach,
Rough elm, or smooth-grained ash, or glossy beech,
In spiral rings ascends the trunk, and lays
Her golden tassels on the leafy sprays,
But does a mischief while she lends a grace,
Straitening its growth by such a strict embrace,
So love that clings around the noblest minds,
Forbids the advancement of the soul he binds.

ALEXANDER SELKIRK.

I am monarch of all I survey,
  My right there is none to dispute,
From the centre all round to the sea,
  I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
O solitude! where are the charms
  That sages have seen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
  Than reign in this horrible place.

I am out of humanity's reach,
  I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech;
  I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts that roam over the plain,
  My form with indifference see,
They are so unacquainted with man,
  Their tameness is shocking to me.

Society, friendship, and love,
  Divinely bestowed upon man,
Oh, had I the wings of a dove,
  How soon would I taste you again!
My sorrows I then might assuage
  In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
  And be cheered by the sallies of youth.

Religion! what treasure untold
  Resides in that heavenly word!

More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell,
These valleys and rocks never heard,
Ne'er sighed at the sound of a knell,
Or smiled when a Sabbath appeared.

Ye winds that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore,
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more.
My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

How fleet is the glance of the mind!
Compared with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-wingèd arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there;
But alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

But the sea-fowl has gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair,
Even here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There's mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought!
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

TO MARY.

The twentieth year is well nigh past
Since first our sky was overcast;—
Ah, would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

. . . . .

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow;—
'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore,
Now rust disused, and shine no more,
My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play'dst the housewife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art,
Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language uttered in a dream:
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign:
Yet gently pressed, press gently mine,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limb thou provest,
That now at every step thou movest,
Upheld by two; yet still thou lovest,
My Mary!

And still to love, though pressed with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But ah! by constant heed I know,
How oft the sadness that I show
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe!
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last,
My Mary!

GEORGE CRABBE.

[*From Edward Shore.*]

THE PERILS OF GENIUS.

Genius! thou gift of Heaven! thou light divine!
Amid what dangers art thou doomed to shine!
Oft will the body's weakness check thy force,
Oft damp thy vigor, and impede thy course;
And trembling nerves compel thee to restrain
Thy nobler efforts, to contend with pain:
Or Want (sad guest!) will in thy presence come,
And breathe around her melancholy gloom:
To life's low cares will thy proud thought confine,
And make her sufferings, her impatience thine.
  Evil and strong, seducing passions prey
On soaring minds, and win them from their way,
Who then to Vice the subject spirits give,
And in the service of the conqueror live:
Like captive Samson making sport for all,
Who feared their strength, and glory in their fall.
  Genius, with virtue, still may lack the aid
Implored by humble minds, and hearts afraid:
May leave to timid souls the shield and sword
Of the tried Faith and the resistless Word;
Amid a world of dangers venturing forth,
Frail, but yet fearless, proud in conscious worth,
Till strong temptation, in some fatal time,
Assails the heart, and wins the soul to crime;
When left by honor, and by sorrow spent,
Unused to pray, unable to repent,
The nobler powers that once exalted high
Th' aspiring man shall then degraded lie:
Reason, through anguish, shall her throne forsake,
And strength of mind but stronger madness make.

[*From Edward Shore.*]

SLEEP THE DETRACTOR OF BEAUTY.

          We indeed have heard
Of sleeping beauty, and it has appeared:
'T is seen in infants — there indeed we find,
The features softened by the slumbering mind;
But other beauties, when disposed to sleep,
Should from the eye of keen inspector keep:
The lovely nymph who would her swain surprise,
May close her mouth, but not conceal her eyes;
Sleep from the fairest face some beauty takes,
And all the homely features homelier makes.

[*From Edward Shore.*]

THE VACILLATING PURPOSE.

Who often reads will sometimes wish to write,
And Shore would yield instruction and delight;
A serious drama he designed, but found
'T was tedious travelling in that gloomy ground;

A deep and solemn story he would try,
But grew ashamed of ghosts, and laid it by;
Sermons he wrote, but they who knew his creed,
Or knew it not, were ill disposed to read;
And he would lastly be the nation's guide,
But, studying, failed to fix upon a side;
Fame he desired, and talents he possessed,
But loved not labor, though he could not rest,
Nor firmly fix the vacillating mind,
That, ever working, could no centre find.

[*From Schools.*]

THE TEACHER.

He, while his troop light-hearted leap and play,
Is all intent on duties of the day;
No more the tyrant stern or judge severe,
He feels the father's and the husband's fear.
Ah! little think the timid, trembling crowd,
That one so wise, so powerful, and so proud,
Should feel himself, and dread the humble ills
Of rent-day charges and of coalmen's bills;
That while they mercy from their judge implore,
He fears himself — a knocking at the door:
And feels the burden as his neighbor states
His humble portion to the parish-rates.
They sit the allotted hours, then eager run,
Rushing to pleasure when the duty 's done;
His hour of pleasure is of different kind,
Then cares domestic rush upon his mind,
And half the ease and comfort he enjoys,
Is when surrounded by slates, books, and boys.

[*From Schools.*]

LEARNING IS LABOR

To learning's second seats we now proceed,
Where humming students gilded primers read;
Or books with letters large and pictures gay,
To make their reading but a kind of play —
"Reading made Easy," so the titles tell:
But they who read must first begin to spell;
There may be profit in these arts, but still,
Learning is labor, call it what you will;
Upon the youthful mind a heavy load,
Nor must we hope to find the royal road.
Some will their easy steps to science show,
And some to heaven itself their by-way know;
Ah! trust them not, — who fame or bliss would share,
Must learn by labor, and must live by care.

[*From the Gentleman Farmer.*]

FOLLY OF LITIGATION.

Who would by law regain his plundered store,
Would pick up fallen mercury from the floor;
If he pursue it, here and there it slides,
He would collect it, but it more divides;

This part and this he stops, but still in vain,
It slips aside, and breaks in parts again;
Till, after time and pains, and care and cost,
He finds his labor and his object lost.

[*From The Gentleman Farmer.*]

AGAINST RASH OPINIONS.

When men in health against physicians rail,
They should consider that their nerves may fail,
Who calls a lawyer rogue, may find, too late,
On one of these depends his whole estate:
Nay, when the world can nothing more produce,
The priest, the insulted priest, may have his use;
Ease, health, and comfort lift a man so high,
These powers are dwarfs that he can scarcely spy:
Pain, sickness, languor, keep a man so low,
That these neglected dwarfs to giants grow:
Happy is he who through the medium sees
Of clear good sense.

. . . . .

[*From The Parish Register.*]

THE AWFUL VACANCY.

Arrived at home, how then they gazed around,
In every place, — where she — no more was found; —
The seat at table she was wont to fill:
The fireside chair, still set, but vacant still:
The garden-walks, a labor all her own:
The latticed bower, with trailing shrubs o'ergrown;
The Sunday pew she filled with all her race, —
Each place of hers was now a sacred place,
That, while it called up sorrows in the eyes,
Pierced the full heart and forced them still to rise.
O sacred Sorrow! by whom souls are tried,
Sent not to punish mortals, but to guide;
If thou art mine, (and who shall proudly dare
To tell his Maker he has had his share?)
Still let me feel for what thy pangs were sent,
And be my guide and not my punishment!

[*From The Dumb Orators.*]

MAN'S DISLIKE TO BE LED.

Man will not follow where a rule is shown,
But loves to take a method of his own;
Explain the way with all your care and skill,
This will he quit, if but to prove he will.

[*From The Village.*]

APOSTROPHE TO THE WHIMSICAL.

Say, ye opprest by some fantastic woes,
Some jarring nerve that baffles your repose;
Who press the downy couch while slaves advance
With timid eye to read the distant glance;
Who with sad prayers the weary doctor tease,
To name the nameless ever-new disease;

Who with mock patience dire complaints endure,
Which real pain, and that alone can cure;
How would ye bear in real pain to lie,
Despised, neglected, left alone to die?
How would ye bear to draw your latest breath,
Where all that's wretched paves the way for death?

[*From Prisons.*]

THE CONDEMNED; HIS DREAM AND ITS AWAKENING.

Still I behold him, every thought employed
On one dire view! — all others are destroyed;
This makes his features ghastly, gives the tone
Of his few words resemblance to a groan;
He takes his tasteless food, and when 't is done,
Counts up his meals, now lessened by that one;
For expectation is on time intent,
Whether he brings us joy or punishment.
Yes! e'en in sleep the impressions all remain,
He hears the sentence and he feels the chain;
He sees the judge and jury, when he shakes,
And loudly cries, "Not guilty," and awakes;
Then chilling tremblings o'er his body creep,
Till worn-out nature is compelled to sleep.
Now comes the dream again: it shows each scene,
With each small circumstance that comes between —
The call to suffering and the very deed —
There crowds go with him, follow, and precede;
Some heartless shout, some pity, all condemn,
While he in fancied envy looks at them:
He seems the place for that sad act to see,
And dreams the very thirst which then will be:
A priest attends — it seems, the one he knew
In his best days, beneath whose care he grew.
At this his terrors take a sudden flight,
He sees his native village with delight:
The house, the chamber, where he once arrayed
His youthful person; where he knelt and prayed;
Then too the comforts he enjoyed at home,
The days of joy: the joys themselves are come; —
The hours of innocence; — the timid look
Of his loved maid, when first her hand he took,
And told his hope; her trembling joy appears,
Her forced reserve, and his retreating fears.
All now is present; — 'tis a moment's gleam
Of former sunshine — stay, delightful dream!
Let him within his pleasant garden walk,
Give him her arm; of blessings let them talk.
Yes! all are with him now, and all the while
Life's early prospects and his Fanny's smile:
Then come his sister, and his village-friend,
And he will now the sweetest moments spend
Life has to yield; — No! never will he find
Again on earth such pleasures in his mind:
He goes through shrubby walks these friends among,
Love in their looks and honor on their tongue:

Nay, there's a charm beyond what nature shows,
The bloom is softer and more sweetly glows; —
Pierced by no crime, and urged by no desire
For more than true and honest hearts require,
They feel the calm delight, and thus proceed,
Through the green lane, — then linger in the mead, —
Stray o'er the heath in all its purple bloom, —
And pluck the blossoms where the wild bees hum;
Then through the broomy bound with ease they pass,
And press the sandy sheepwalk's slender grass
Where dwarfish flowers among the gorse are spread,
And the lamb browses by the linnet's bed;
Then 'cross the bounding brook they make their way
O'er its rough bridge and there behold the bay! —
The ocean smiling to the fervid sun —
The waves that faintly fall and slowly run —
The ships at distance and the boats at hand;
And now they walk upon the sea-side sand,
Counting the number and what kind they be,
Ships softly sinking in the sleepy sea:
Now arm in arm, now parted, they behold
The glittering waters on the shingles rolled:
The timid girls, half dreading their design,
Dip the small foot in the retarded brine,
And search for crimson weeds, which spreading flow,
Or lie like pictures on the sand below:
With all those bright red pebbles, that the sun
Through the small waves so softly shines upon;
And those live lucid jellies which the eye
Delights to trace as they swim glittering by:
Pearl-shells and rubied star-fish they admire,
And will arrange above the parlor fire, —
Tokens of bliss! — "Oh! horrible! a wave
Roars as it rises — save me, Edward! save!"
She cries: — Alas! the watchman on his way
Calls, and lets in — truth, terror, and the day!

[*From The Lover's Journey.*]

EXTERNAL IMPRESSIONS DEPENDENT ON THE SOUL'S MOODS.

It is the Soul that sees: the outward eyes
Present the object, but the Mind descries:
And thence delight, disgust, or cool indifference rise:
When minds are joyful, then we look around,
And what is seen is all on fairy ground;
Again they sicken, and on every view
Cast their own dull and melancholy hue;
Or, if absorbed by their peculiar cares,
The vacant eye on viewless matter glares,
Our feelings still upon our views attend,
And their own natures to the objects lend;
Sorrow and joy are in their influence sure,
Long as the passion reigns th' effects endure:
But Love in minds his various changes makes,
And clothes each object with the change he takes;
His light and shade on every view he throws,
And on each object, what he feels, bestows.

[*From The Parting Hour.*]

LIFE.

Minutely trace man's life: year after year,
Through all his days let all his deeds appear,
And then, though some may in that life be strange,
Yet there appears no vast nor sudden change:
The links that bind those various deeds are seen,
And no mysterious void is left between.
But let these binding links be all destroyed,
All that through years he suffered or enjoyed:
Let that vast gap be made, and then behold —
This was the youth, and he is thus when old;
Then we at once the work of time survey,
And in an instant see a life's decay;
Pain mixed with pity in our bosoms rise,
And sorrow takes new sadness from surprise.

[*From The Parting Hour.*]

FRIENDSHIP IN AGE AND SORROW.

Beneath yon tree, observe an ancient pair —
A sleeping man; a woman in her chair,
Watching his looks with kind and pensive air;
Nor wife, nor sister she, nor is the name
Nor kindred of this friendly pair the same;
Yet so allied are they, that few can feel
Her constant, warm, unwearied, anxious zeal;
Their years and woes, although they long have loved,
Keep their good name and conduct unreproved;
Thus life's small comforts they together share,
And while life lingers, for the grave prepare,
No other subjects on their spirits press,
Nor gain such interest as the past distress;
Grievous events, that from the memory drive
Life's common cares, and those alone survive,
Mix with each thought, in every action share,
Darken each dream, and blend with every prayer.

[*From The Library.*]

CONTROVERSIALISTS.

Against her foes Religion well defends
Her sacred truths, but often fears her friends;
If learned, their pride, if weak, their zeal she dreads,
And their hearts' weakness who have soundest heads:
But most she fears the controversial pen,
The holy strife of disputatious men;
Who the blest Gospel's peaceful page explore,
Only to fight against its precepts more.

[*From The Library.*]

TO CRITICS.

Foes to our race! if ever ye have known
A father's fears for offspring of your own;
If ever, smiling o'er a lucky line,
Ye thought the sudden sentiment divine,
Then paused and doubted, and then tired of doubt,
With rage as sudden dashed the stanza out; —

If, after fearing much and pausing long,
Ye ventured on the world your labored song,
And from the crusty critics of those days
Implored the feeble tribute of their praise,
Remember now the fears that moved you then,
And, spite of truth, let mercy guide your pen.

[*From The Library.*]

PHILOSOPHY.

How vice and virtue in the soul contend;
How widely differ, yet how nearly blend;
What various passions war on either part,
And now confirm, now melt the yielding heart:
How Fancy loves around the world to stray,
While Judgment slowly picks his sober way;
The stores of memory, and the flights sublime
Of genius bound by neither space nor time;—
All these divine Philosophy explores,
Till, lost in awe, she wonders and adores.

[*From The Library.*]

THE UNIVERSAL LOT.

Care lives with all; no rules, no precepts save
The wise from woe, no fortitude the brave;
Grief is to man as certain as the grave:
Tempests and storms in life's whole progress rise,
And hope shines dimly through o'erclouded skies;
Some drops of comfort on the favored fall,
But showers of sorrow are the lot of *all*:
Partial to talents, then, shall Heaven withdraw
Th' afflicting rod, or break the general law?
Shall he who soars, inspired by loftier views,
Life's little cares and little pains refuse?
Shall he not rather feel a double share
Of mortal woe, when doubly armed to bear?

[*From The Library.*]

UNION OF FAITH AND REASON NECESSARY.

When first Religion came to bless the land,
Her friends were then a firm believing band,
To doubt was then to plunge in guilt extreme,
And all was gospel that a monk could dream;
Insulted Reason fled the grovelling soul,
For Fear to guide, and visions to control;
But now, when Reason has assumed her throne,
She, in her turn, demands to reign alone;
Rejecting all that lies beyond her view,
And, being judge, will be a witness too:
Insulted Faith then leaves the doubtful mind,
To seek the truth, without a power to find:
Ah! when will both in friendly beams unite,
And pour on erring man resistless light?

[*From The Library.*]

BOOKS.

But what strange art, what magic can dispose
The troubled mind to change its native woes?
Or lead us willing from ourselves, to see
Others more wretched, more undone than we?
This BOOKS can do; — nor this alone; they give
New views to life, and teach us how to live;
They soothe the grieved, the stubborn they chastise,
Fools they admonish, and confirm the wise;
Their aid they yield to all; they never shun
The man of sorrow, nor the wretch undone;
Unlike the hard, the selfish, and the proud,
They fly not sullen from the suppliant crowd;
Nor tell to various people various things,
But show to subjects what they show to kings.

DINAH MULOCK CRAIK.

GREEN THINGS GROWING.

Oh, the green things growing, the green things growing,
The faint sweet smell of the green things growing!
I should like to live, whether I smile or grieve.
Just to watch the happy life of my green things growing.

Oh, the fluttering and the pattering of those green things growing!
How they talk each to each, when none of us are knowing;
In the wonderful white of the weird moonlight
Or the dim dreamy dawn when the cocks are crowing.

I love, I love them so,— my green things growing!
And I think that they love me, without false showing;
For by many a tender touch, they comfort me so much,
With the soft mute comfort of green things growing.
And in the rich store of their blossoms glowing
Ten for one I take they're on me bestowing:
Oh, I should like to see, if God's will it may be,
Many, many a summer of my green things growing!

But if I must be gathered for the angels' sowing,
Sleep out of sight awhile, like the green things growing,
Though dust to dust return, I think I'll scarcely mourn,
If I may change into green things growing.

NOW AND AFTERWARDS.

"Two hands upon the breast,
And labor's done;
Two pale feet crossed in rest,—
The race is won;
Two eyes with coin-weights shut,
And all tears cease;

Two lips where grief is mute,
Anger at peace;"
So pray we oftentimes, mourning our lot
God in his kindness answereth not.

"Two hands to work addrest
Aye for His praise;
Two feet that never rest
Walking His ways;
Two eyes that look above
Through all their tears;
Two lips still breathing love,
Not wrath, nor fears;"
So pray we afterwards, low on our knees;
Pardon those erring prayers! Father, hear these!

PLIGHTED.

MINE to the core of the heart, my beauty!
Mine, all mine, and for love, not duty:
Love given willingly, full and free,
Love for love's sake,—as mine to thee.
Duty's a slave that keeps the keys,
But Love, the master, goes in and out
Of his goodly chambers with song and shout,
Just as he please,—just as he please.

Mine, from the dear head's crown, brown-golden,
To the silken foot that's scarce beholden;
Give to a few friends hand or smile,
Like a generous lady, now and awhile,
But the sanctuary heart, that none dare win,
Keep holiest of holiest evermore;
The crowd in the aisles may watch the door,
The high-priest only enters in.

Mine, my own, without doubts or terrors,
With all thy goodnesses, all thy errors,
Unto me and to me alone revealed,
"A spring shut up, a fountain sealed."
Many may praise thee,—praise mine as thine,
Many may love thee,—I'll love them too;
But thy heart of hearts, pure, faithful, and true,
Must be mine, mine wholly, and only mine.

Mine!—God, I thank Thee that Thou hast given
Something all mine on this side heaven:
Something as much myself to be
As this my soul which I lift to Thee:
Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone;
Life of my life, whom Thou dost make
Two to the world for the world's work's sake,—
But each unto each, as in Thy sight, one.

PHILIP, MY KING.

LOOK at me with thy large brown eyes,
Philip, my king,
Round whom the enshadowing purple lies
Of babyhood's royal dignities;
Lay on my neck thy tiny hand
With love's invisible sceptre laden
I am thine Esther to command
Till thou shalt find a queen-handmaiden,
Philip, my king.

Oh, the day when thou goest a-wooing,
Philip, my king!
When those beautiful lips are suing,
And some gentle heart's bars undoing
Thou dost enter, love-crowned, and there
Sittest love-glorified. Rule kindly,
Tenderly, over thy kingdom fair,
For we that love, ah! we love so blindly,
Philip, my king.

Up from thy sweet mouth,—up to thy brow,
Philip, my king!
The spirit that there lies sleeping now
May rise like a giant and make men bow
As to one heaven-chosen amongst his peers:
My Saul, than thy brethren taller and fairer
Let me behold thee in future years;
Yet thy head needeth a circlet rarer,
Philip, my king.

—A wreath not of gold, but palm. One day,
Philip, my king,
Thou too must tread, as we trod, a way
Thorny and cruel and cold and gray:
Rebels within thee and foes without,
Will snatch at thy crown. But march on, glorious,
Martyr, yet monarch; till angels shout
As thou sit'st at the feet of God victorious,
"Philip, the king!"

TOO LATE.

Could you come back to me, Douglas, Douglas,
In the old likeness that I knew,
I would be so faithful, so loving, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Never a scornful word should grieve you,
I'd smile on you sweet as the angels do;—
Sweet as your smile on me shone ever.
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

Oh, to call back the days that are not!
My eyes were blinded, your words were few,
Do you know the truth now up in heaven,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true?

I never was worthy of you, Douglas;
Not half worthy the like of you:
Now all men beside seem to me like shadows,—
I love *you*, Douglas, tender and true.

Stretch out your hand to me, Douglas, Douglas,
Drop forgiveness from heaven like dew;
As I lay my heart on your dead heart, Douglas,
Douglas, Douglas, tender and true.

RESIGNING.

Children, that lay their pretty garlands by
So piteously, yet with a humble mind;
Sailors, who, when their ship rocks in the wind,
Cast out her freight with half-averted eye,
Riches for life exchanging solemnly,
Lest they should never gain the wished-for shore;—
Thus we, O Father, standing Thee before,
Do lay down at Thy feet without a sigh
Each after each our precious things and rare,
Our dear heart-jewels and our garlands fair.
Perhaps Thou knewest that the flowers would die,
And the long-voyaged hoards be found but dust:
So took'st them, while unchanged. To Thee we trust
For incorruptible treasure: Thou art just.

MY LITTLE BOY THAT DIED.

Look at his pretty face for just one minute!
His braided frock and dainty buttoned shoes;

His firm-shut hand, the favorite plaything in it,—
Then tell me, mothers, was't not hard to lose
And miss him from my side,—
My little boy that died?

How many another boy, as dear and charming,
His father's hope, his mother's one delight,
Slips through strange sicknesses, all fear disarming,
And lives a long, long life in parents' sight!
Mine was so short a pride!
And then,—my poor boy died.

I see him rocking on his wooden charger;
I hear him pattering through the house all day;
I watch his great blue eyes grow large and larger,
Listening to stories, whether grave or gay,
Told at the bright fireside,
So dark now, since he died.

But yet I often think my boy is living,
As living as my other children are.
When good-night kisses I all round am giving,
I keep one for him, though he is so far.
Can a mere grave divide
Me from him,—though he died?

So, while I come and plant it o'er with daisies
(Nothing but childish daisies all year round),
Continually God's hand the curtain raises,
And I can hear his merry voice's sound,
And feel him at my side,—
My little boy that died.

CHRISTOPHER PEARSE CRANCH.

A THRUSH IN A GILDED CAGE.

WAS this the singer I had heard so long,
But never till this evening, face to face?
And were they his, those tones so unlike song,
Those words conventional and commonplace?

Those echoes of the usual social chat
That filled with noise confused the crowded hall;
That smiling face, black coat, and white cravat;
Those fashionable manners,—was this all?

He glanced at freedmen, operas, politics,
And other common topics of the day;
But not one brilliant image did he mix
With all the prosy things he had to say.

At least I hoped that one I long had known,
In the inspired books that built his fame,
Would breathe some word, some sympathetic tone,
Fresh from the ideal region whence he came.

And so I leave the well-dressed, buzzing crowd,
And vent my spleen alone here by my fire;
Mourning the fading of my golden cloud,
The disappointment of my life's desire.

Simple enthusiast! why do you require
A budding rose for every thorny stalk?
Why must we poets always bear the lyre
And sing, when fashion forces us to talk?

Only at moments comes the muse's light.
Alone, like shy wood-thrushes, warble we.
Catch us in traps like this dull crowd to-night,
We are but plain, brown-feathered birds, you see!

COMPENSATION.

Tears wash away the atoms in the eye
That smarted for a day;
Rain-clouds that spoiled the splendors of the sky
The fields with flowers array.

No chamber of pain but has some hidden door
That promises release;
No solitude so drear but yields its store
Of thought and inward peace.

No night so wild but brings the constant sun
With love and power untold;
No time so dark but through its woof there run
Some blessed threads of gold.

And through the long and storm-tost centuries burn
In changing calm and strife
The Pharos-lights of truth, where'er we turn,—
The unquenched lamps of life.

O Love supreme! O Providence divine!
What self-adjusting springs
Of law and life, what even scales, are thine,
What sure-returning wings
Of hopes and joys that flit like birds away,
When chilling autumn blows,
But come again, long ere the buds of May
Their rosy lips unclose!

What wondrous play of mood and accident
Through shifting days and years;
What fresh returns of vigor overspent
In feverish dreams and fears!

What wholesome air of conscience and of thought
When doubts and forms oppress;
What vistas opening to the gates we sought
Beyond the wilderness;

Beyond the narrow cells where self-involved,
Like chrysalids, we wait
The unknown births, the mysteries unsolved
Of death and change and fate!

O Light divine! we need no fuller test
That all is ordered well;
We know enough to trust that all is best
Where Love and Wisdom dwell.

MEMORIAL HALL.

Amid the elms that interlace
Round Harvard's grounds their branches tall,
We greet no walls of statelier grace
Than thine, our proud Memorial Hall!

Through arching boughs and roofs of green
Whose dappled lights and shadows lie
Along the turf and road, is seen
Thy noble form against the sky.

And miles away, on fields and streams,
Or where the woods the hilltop crown,
The monumental temple gleams,
A landmark to each neighboring town.

Nor this alone; New England knows
A deeper meaning in the pride
Whose stately architecture shows
How Harvard's children fought and died.

Therefore this hallowed pile recalls
The heroes, young and true and brave,
Who gave their memories to these walls,
Their lives to fill the soldier's grave.

The farmer, as he drives his team
To market in the morn, afar
Beholds the golden sunrise gleam
Upon thee, like a glistening star.

And gazing, he remembers well
Why stands yon tower so fair and tall.
His sons perhaps in battle fell;
For him, too, shines Memorial Hall.

And sometimes as the student glides
Along the winding Charles, and sees
Across the flats thy glowing sides
Above the elms and willow-trees,

Upon his oar he'll turn and pause,
Remembering the heroic aims
Of those who linked their country's cause
In deathless glory with their names.

And as against the moonlit sky
The shadowy mass looms overhead,
Well may we linger with a sigh
Beneath the tablets of the dead.

The snow-drifts on thy roof shall wreathe
Their crowns of virgin white for them;
The whispering winds of summer breathe
At morn and eve their requiem.

For them the Cambridge bells shall chime
Across the noises of the town;
The cannon's peal recall their time
Of stern resolve and brief renown.

Concord and Lexington shall still,
Like deep to deep, to Harvard call;
The tall gray shaft on Bunker Hill
Speak greetings to Memorial Hall.

Oh, never may the land forget
Her loyal sons who died that we
Might live, remembering still our debt,
The costly price of Liberty!

THOUGHT.

THOUGHT is deeper than all speech,
Feeling deeper than all thought;
Souls to souls can never teach
What unto themselves was taught.

We are spirits clad in veils;
Man by man was never seen;
All our deep communing fails
To remove the shadowy screen.

Heart to heart was never known;
Mind with mind did never meet;
We are columns left alone
Of a temple once complete.

Like the stars that gem the sky,
Far apart though seeming near,
In our light we scattered lie;
All is thus but starlight here.

What is social company
But a babbling summer stream?
What our wise philosophy
But the glancing of a dream?

Only when the sun of love
Melts the scattered stars of thought,
Only when we live above
What the dim-eyed world hath taught;

Only when our souls are fed
By the fount which gave them birth,
And by inspiration led
Which they never drew from earth,

We, like parted drops of rain,
Swelling till they meet and run,
Shall be all absorbed again,
Melting, flowing into one.

I IN THEE, AND THOU IN ME.

I am but clay in thy hands, but Thou art the all-loving artist.
Passive I lie in thy sight, yet in my selfhood I strive
So to embody the life and the love thou ever impartest,
That in my sphere of the finite, I may be truly alive.

Knowing thou needest this form, as I thy divine inspiration,
Knowing thou shapest the clay with a vision and purpose divine,
So would I answer each touch of thy hand in its loving creation,
That in my conscious life thy power and beauty may shine,

Reflecting the noble intent thou hast in forming thy creatures;
Waking from sense into life of the soul, and the image of thee;
Working with thee in thy work to model humanity's features
Into the likeness of God, myself from myself I would free.

One with all human existence, no one above or below me;
Lit by thy wisdom and love, as roses are steeped in the morn;
Growing from clay to a statue, from statue to flesh, till thou know me
Wrought into manhood celestial, and in thine image re-born.

So in thy love will I trust, bringing me sooner or later
Past the dark screen that divides these shows of the finite from thee.
Thine, thine only, this warm, dear life, O loving Creator!
Thine the invisible future, born of the present, must be.

SOFT, BROWN, SMILING EYES.

Soft, brown, smiling eyes,
Looking back through years,
Smiling through the mist of time,
Filling mine with tears;
On this sunny morn,
While the grape-blooms swing
In the scented air of June,—
Why these memories bring?

Silky rippling curls,
Tresses long ago
Laid beneath the shaded sod
Where the violets blow;
Why across the blue
Of the peerless day
Do ye droop to meet my own,
Now all turned to gray?

Voice whose tender tones
Break in sudden mirth,
Heard far back in boyhood's spring,
Silent now on earth;
Why so sweet and clear,
While the bird and bee
Fill the balmy summer air,
Come your tones to me?

Sweet, ah, sweeter far
Than yon thrush's trill,
Sadder, sweeter than the wind,
Woods, or murmuring rill,
Spirit words and songs
O'er my senses creep.
Do I breathe the air of dreams?
Do I wake or sleep?

WHY?

. . . . .

Why was I born, and where was I
Before this living mystery
That weds the body to the soul?
What are the laws by whose control

I live and feel and think and know ?
What the allegiance that I owe
To tides beyond all time and space ?
What form of faith must I embrace ?
Why thwarted, starved, and overborne
By fate,—an exile, driven forlorn
By fitful winds, where each event
Seems but the whirl of accident ?
Why feel our wings so incomplete,
Or, flying, but a plumed deceit,
Renewing all our lives to us
The fable old of Icarus ?

Tell me the meaning of the breath
That whispers from the house of death,
That chills thought's metaphysic strife,
That dims the dream of After-life.
Why, if we lived not ere our birth,
Hope for a state beyond this earth ?
Tell me the secret of the hope
That gathers, as we upwards ope
The skylights of the prisoned soul
Unto the perfect and the whole;
Yet why the loveliest things of earth
Mock in their death their glorious birth.
Why, when the scarlet sunset floods
The west beyond the hills and woods,
Or June with roses crowds my porch,
Or northern lights with crimson torch
Illume the snow and veil the stars
With streaming bands and wavering bars,
Or music's sensuous, soul-like wine
Intoxicates with trance divine,—
Why then must sadness like a thief
Steal my aromas of belief,
And like a cloud that shuts the day
At sunrise, turn my gold to gray ?

Tell me why instincts meant for good
Turn to a madness of the blood;
And, baffling all our morals nice,
Nature seems nearly one with vice;
What sin and misery mean, if blent
With good in one divine intent.
Why from such source must evil spring,
And finite still mean suffering ?

· · · · ·

Look on the millions born to blight;
The souls that pine for warmth and light:
The crushed and stifled swarms that pack
The foul streets and the alleys black,
The miserable lives that crawl
Outside the grim partition wall
'Twixt rich and poor, 'twixt foul and fair,
'Twixt vaulting hope and lame despair.
On that wall's sunny side, within,
Hang ripening fruits and tendrils green,
O'er garden-beds of bloom and spice,
And perfume as of paradise.
There happy children run and talk
Along the shade-flecked gravel-walk,
And lovers sit in rosy bowers,
And music overflows the hours,
And wealth and health and mirth and books
Make pictures in Arcadian nooks.
But on that wall's grim outer stones
The fierce north-wind of winter groans;
Through blinding dust, o'er bleak highway,
The slant sun's melancholy ray
Sees stagnant pool and poisonous weed,
The hearts that faint, the feet that bleed,
The grovelling aim, the flagging faith,
The starving curse, the drowning death!

O wise philosopher! you soothe
Our troubles with a touch too smooth.
Too plausibly your reasonings come.
They will not guide me to my home;
They lead me on a little way
Through meadows, groves, and gardens gay,
Until a wall shuts out my day,—
A screen whose top is hid in clouds,
Whose base is deep on dead men's shrouds.
Could I dive under pain and death,
Or mount and breathe the whole heaven's breath,

I might begin to comprehend
How the Beginning joins the End.

. . . . .

We agonize in doubt, perplexed
O'er fate, free-will, and Bible-text.
In vain. The spirit finds no vent
From out the imprisoning temperament.

. . . . .

Therefore I bow my spirit to the Power
That underflows and fills my little hour.
I feel the eternal symphony afloat,
In which I am a breath, a passing note.
I may be but a dull and jarring nerve
In the great body, yet some end I serve.

Yea, though I dream and question still the dream
Thus floating by me upon Being's stream,
Some end I serve. Love reigns. I cannot lose
The Primal Light, though thousand-fold its hues.
I can believe that somewhere Truth abides;
Not in the ebb and flow of those small tides
That float the dogmas of our saints and sects;
Not in a thousand tainted dialects,
But in the one pure language, could we hear,
That fills with love and light the seraphs' sphere.
I can believe there is a Central Good,
That burns and shines o'er temperament and mood;
That somewhere God will melt the clouds away,
And his great purpose shine as shines the day.
Then may we know why now we could not know;
Why the great Isis-curtain drooped so low;
Why we were blindfold on a path of light;
Why came wild gleams and voices through the night;
Why we seemed drifting, storm-tost, without rest,
And were but rocking on a mother's breast.

GEORGE CROLY.

EVENING.

When eve is purpling cliff and cave,
Thoughts of the heart, how soft ye flow!
Not softer on the western wave
The golden lines of sunset glow.

Then all, by chance or fate removed,
Like spirits crowd upon the eye;
The few we liked — the one we loved!
And the whole heart is memory.

And life is like a fading flower,
Its beauty dying as we gaze;
Yet as the shadows round us lour,
Heaven pours above a brighter blaze.
When morning sheds its gorgeous dye,
Our hope, our heart, to earth is given;
But dark and lonely is the eye
That turns not, at its eve, to heaven.

CUPID GROWN CAREFUL.

There was once a gentle time
When the world was in its prime;
And every day was holiday,
And every month was lovely May.
Cupid then had but to go
With his purple wings and bow:

And in blossomed vale and grove
Every shepherd knelt to love.
Then a rosy, dimpled cheek,
And a blue eye, fond and meek;
And a ringlet-wreathen brow,
Like hyacinths on a bed of snow:
And a low voice, silver sweet,
From a lip without deceit;
Only these the hearts could move
Of the simple swains to love.

But that time is gone and past,
Can the summer always last?
And the swains are wiser grown,
And the heart is turned to stone,
And the maiden's rose may wither;
Cupid's fled, no man knows whither
But another Cupid's come,
With a brow of care and gloom:
Fixed upon the earthly mould,
Thinking of the sullen gold;
In his hand the bow no more,
At his back the household store,
That the bridal gold must buy:
Useless now the smile and sigh;
But he wears the pinion still,
Flying at the sight of ill.

Oh, for the old true-love time,
When the world was in its prime!

JOHN CROWNE.

WISHES FOR OBSCURITY.

How miserable a thing is a great man!
Take noisy vexing greatness they that please;
Give me obscure and safe and silent ease.
Acquaintance and commerce let me have none
With any powerful thing but time alone:
My rest let Time be fearful to offend,
And creep by me as by a slumbering friend;

. . . . .

Oh, wretched he who, called abroad by power,
To know himself can never find an hour!
Strange to himself, but to all others known,
Lends every one his life, but uses none;
So, ere he tasted life, to death he goes,
And himself loses ere himself he knows.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

THOU HAST SWORN BY THY GOD.

Thou hast sworn by thy God, my Jeanie,
  By that pretty white hand o' thine,
And by a' the lowing stars in heaven,
  That thou wad aye be mine;
And I hae sworn by my God, my Jeanie,
  And by that kind heart o' thine,
By a' the stars sown thick owre heaven,
  That thou shalt aye be mine.

Then foul fa' the hands that wad loose sic bands,
  An' the heart that wad part sic luve;
But there's nae hand can loose my band,
  But the finger o' God abuve.
Though the wee, wee cot maun be my bield,
  And my claithing e'er so mean,
I wad lap me up rich i' the faulds o' luve,
  Heaven's armfu' o' my Jean.

Her white arm wad be a pillow for me
Far safter than the down;
And luve wad winnow owre us his kind, kind wings,
An' sweetly I'd sleep, an' soun'.
Come here to me, thou lass o' my luve,
Come here, and kneel wi' me!
The morn is fu' o' the presence o' God,
An' I canna pray without thee.

The morn-wind is sweet 'mang the beds o' new flowers,
The wee birds sing kindlie an' hie;
Our gudeman leans owre his kale-yard dyke,
And a blithe auld bodie is he.
The beuk maun be taen when the carle comes hame,
Wi' the holie psalmodie;
And thou maun speak o' me to thy God,
And I will speak o' thee.

SHE'S GANE TO DWELL IN HEAVEN.

She's gane to dwall in heaven, my lassie,
She's gane to dwall in heaven:
Ye're owre pure, quo' the voice o' God,
For dwalling out o' heaven!

O, what'll she do in heaven, my lassie?
O, what'll she do in heaven?
She'll mix her ain thoughts wi' angels' sangs,
An' make them mair meet for heaven.

She was beloved by a', my lassie,
She was beloved by a';
But an angel fell in love wi' her,
An' took her frae us a'.

Low there thou lies, my lassie,
Low there thou lies,
A bonnier form ne'er went to the yird,
Nor fra it will arise!

Fu' soon I'll follow thee, my lassie.
Fu' soon I'll follow thee;
Thou left me naught to covet ahin'
But took gudeness sel' wi' thee.

I looked on thy death-cold face, my lassie,
I looked on thy death-cold face;
Thou seemed a lily new cut i' the bud,
An' fading in its place.

I looked on thy death-shut eye, my lassie,
I looked on thy death-shut eye;
An' a lovelier light in the brow o' heaven
Fell time shall ne'er destroy.

Thy lips were ruddy and calm, my lassie,
Thy lips were ruddy and calm;
But gane was the holy breath o' heaven,
To sing the evening psalm.

There's naught but dust now mine, lassie,
There's naught but dust now mine;
My saul's wi' thee i' the cauld grave,
An' why should I stay behin'?

A WET SHEET AND A FLOWING SEA.

A wet sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast,
And fills the white and rustling sail,
And bends the gallant mast —
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While, like the eagle free,
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on our lee.

"O for a soft and gentle wind!"
I heard a fair one cry;
But give to me the swelling breeze,
And white waves heaving high,—
The white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free;
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

MAJOR AND MINOR.

A bird sang sweet and strong
  In the top of the highest tree;
He sang, — "I pour out my soul in song
  For the summer that soon shall be."

But deep in the shady wood
  Another bird sang, — "I pour
My soul on the solemn solitude
  For the springs that return no more."

EGYPTIAN SERENADE.

Sing again the song you sung,
When we were together young —
When there were but you and I
Underneath the summer sky.

Sing the song, and o'er and o'er,
Though I know that nevermore
Will it seem the song you sung
When we were together young.

MUSIC IN THE AIR.

Oh, listen to the howling sea,
  That beats on the remorseless shore;
Oh, listen, for that sound shall be,
  When our wild hearts shall beat no more.

Oh, listen well, and listen long!
  For, sitting folded close to me,
You could not hear a sweeter song
  Than that hoarse murmur of the sea.

RICHARD HENRY DANA.

THE HUSBAND AND WIFE'S GRAVE.

Husband and wife! no converse now ye hold,
As once ye did in your young days of love,
On its alarms, its anxious hours, delays,
Its silent meditations and glad hopes,
Its fears, impatience, quiet sympathies;
Nor do ye speak of joy assured, and bliss
Full, certain, and possessed. Domestic cares
Call you not now together. Earnest talk
On what your children may be, moves you not.
Ye lie in silence, and an awful silence;
Not like to that in which ye rested once
Most happy, — silence eloquent, when heart
With heart held speech, and your mysterious frames,
Harmonious, sensitive, at every beat,
Touched the soft notes of love.

          A stillness deep,
Insensible, unheeding, folds you round,
And darkness, as a stone, has sealed you in;
Away from all the living, here ye rest,
In all the nearness of the narrow tomb,
Yet feel ye not each other's presence now; —
Dread fellowship! — together, yet alone.

. . . . .

  Why is it that I linger round this tomb?
What holds it? Dust that cumbered those I mourn.
They shook it off, and laid aside earth's robes,

And put on those of light. They' re gone to dwell
In love, — their God's and angels'! Mutual love,
That bound them here, no longer needs a speech
For full communion; nor sensations, strong,
Within the breast, their prison, strive in vain
To be set free, and meet their kind in joy.
Changed to celestials, thoughts that rise in each
By natures new, impart themselves, though silent.
Each quickening sense, each throb of holy love,
Affections sanctified, and the full glow
Of being, which expand and gladden one,
By union all mysterious, thrill and live
In both immortal frames; — sensation all,
And thought, pervading, mingling sense and thought!
Ye paired, yet one! wrapt in a consciousness
Twofold, yet single, — this is love, this life!

. . . . .

THE SOUL.

Come, brother, turn with me from pining thought
And all the inward ills that sin has wrought;
Come, send abroad a love for all who live,
And feel the deep content in turn they give.
Kind wishes and good deeds, — they make not poor;
They 'll home again, full laden, to thy door;
The streams of love flow back where they begin,
For springs of outward joys lie deep within.
Even let them flow, and make the places glad
Where dwell thy fellow-men. — Shouldst thou be sad,
And earth seem bare, and hours, once happy, press
Upon thy thoughts, and make thy loneliness
More lonely for the past, thou then shalt hear
The music of those waters running near;
And thy faint spirit drink the cooling stream,
And thine eye gladden with the playing beam
That now upon the water dances, now
Leaps up and dances in the hanging bough.
Is it not lovely? Tell me, where doth dwell
The power that wrought so beautiful a spell?
In thine own bosom, brother? Then as thine
Guard with a reverent fear this power divine.
And if, indeed, 't is not the outward state,
But temper of the soul by which we rate
Sadness or joy, even let thy bosom move
With noble thoughts and wake thee into love;
And let each feeling in thy breast be given
An honest aim, which, sanctified by Heaven,
And springing into act, new life imparts,
Till beats thy frame as with a thousand hearts.
Sin clouds the mind's clear vision from its birth,
Around the self-starved soul has spread a dearth.
The earth is full of life; the living Hand
Touched it with life; and all its forms expand
With principles of being made to suit
Man's varied powers and raise him from the brute.
And shall the earth of higher ends be full, —

Earth which thou tread'st, — and thy poor mind be dull?
Thou talk of life, with half thy soul asleep?
Thou "living dead man," let thy spirit leap
Forth to the day, and let the fresh air blow
Through thy soul's shut-up mansion. Wouldst thou know
Something of what is life, shake off this death;
Have thy soul feel the universal breath
With which all nature's quick, and learn to be
Sharer in all that thou dost touch or see;
Break from thy body's grasp, thy spirit's trance;
Give thy soul air, thy faculties expanse;
Love, joy, even sorrow, — yield thyself to all!
They make thy freedom, groveller, not thy thrall.
Knock off the shackles which thy spirit bind
To dust and sense, and set at large the mind!
Then move in sympathy with God's great whole,
And be like man at first, a *living soul*.

MARY LEE DEMAREST.

MY AIN COUNTREE.

I'M far frae my hame, an' I'm weary aftenwhiles,
For the langed-for hame-bringing, an' my Father's welcome smiles;
I'll ne'er be fu' content, until mine een do see
The shining gates o' heaven, an' mine ain countree.

The earth is flecked wi' flowers, mony-tinted, fresh, an' gay,
The birdies warble blithely, for my Father made them sae;
But these sights and these soun's will as naething be to me,
When I hear the angels singing in my ain countree.

I've his gude word of promise that some gladsome day, the King
To his ain royal palace his banished hame will bring:
Wi' een an wi' hearts runnin' owre, we shall see
The King in his beauty in our ain countree.

My sins hae been mony, an' my sorrows hae been sair,
But there they'll never vex me, nor be remembered mair;
His bluid has made me white, his hand shall dry mine e'e,
When he brings me hame at last, to my ain countree.

Like a bairn to its mither, a wee birdie to its nest,
I wad fain be ganging noo, unto my Saviour's breast:
For he gathers in his bosom, witless, worthless lambs like me,
An' carries them himsel' to his ain countree.

He's faithfu' that hath promised, he'll surely come again,
He'll keep his tryst wi' me, at what hour I dinna ken;
But he bids me still to wait, and ready aye to be
To gang at any moment to my ain countree.

So I'm watching aye an' singin' o' my hame as I wait,
For the soun'ing o' his footfa' this side the shining gate;
God gie his grace to ilk ane wha listens noo to me,
That we a' may gang in gladness to our ain countree.

SIR AUBREY DE VERE.

MISSPENT TIME.

There is no remedy for time misspent;
No healing for the waste of idleness,
Whose very languor is a punishment
Heavier than active souls can feel or guess.
O hours of indolence and discontent,
Not now to be redeemed! ye sting not less
Because I know this span of life was lent
For lofty duties, not for selfishness, —
Not to be whiled away in aimless dreams,
But to improve ourselves, and serve mankind,
Life and its choicest faculties were given.
Man should be ever better than he seems,
And shape his acts, and discipline his mind,
To walk adorning earth, with hope of heaven.

COLUMBUS.

He was a man whom danger could not daunt,
Nor sophistry perplex, nor pain subdue;
A stoic, reckless of the world's vain taunt,
And steeled the path of honor to pursue;
So, when by all deserted, still he knew
How best, to soothe the heart-sick, or confront
Sedition, schooled with equal eye to view
The frowns of grief, and the base pangs of want.
But when he saw that promised land arise
In all its rare and bright varieties,
Lovelier than fondest fancy ever trod;
Then softening nature melted in his eyes;
He knew his fame was full, and blessed his God;
And fell upon his face, and kissed the virgin sod!

AUBREY THOMAS DE VERE.

[*From The Poetic Faculty.*]

POWER OF POESY.

. . . . .

My grief or mirth
Attunes the earth,
I harmonize the world!
Remotest times
And unfriendly climes
In my song lie clasped and curled!
When an arm too strong
Does the poor man wrong
I shout, and he bursts his chain:
But at my command
He drops the brand;
And I sing as he flings the grain.
The loved draw near,
The lost appear;
I sweeten the mourner's sigh:
At my vesper lay
The gates of day
Close back with harmony.
No plains I reap,
I fold no sheep
Yet my home is on every shore:
My fancies I wing
With the plumes of spring,
And voyage the round earth o'er.
In the fight I wield
Nor sword nor shield,
But my voice like a lance makes way
No crown I bear,
But the heads that wear
Earth's crowns, my word obey.
Through an age's night
I fling the light

Of my brow — An Argo soon
From her pine-wood leaps
On the untracked deeps;
And the dark becomes as noon.

. . . . . .

THE ANGELS KISS HER.

The angels kiss her while she sleeps,
And leave their freshness on her breath:
Star after star, descending, peeps
Along her loose hair, dark as death.
From his low nest the night-wind creeps,
And o'er her bosom wandereth.

'Tis morning: in their pure embrace
The airs of dawn their playmate greet:
Dusk fields expect their wonted grace,
Those silken touches of swift feet:
With songs the birds salute her face;
And Silence doth her voice entreat!

BENDING BETWEEN ME AND THE TAPER.

Bending between me and the taper
While o'er the harp her white hands strayed,
The shadows of her waving tresses
Above my hand were gently swayed.

With every graceful movement waving,
I marked their undulating swell:
I watched them while they met and parted,
Curled close or widened, rose or fell.

I laughed in triumph and in pleasure,
So strange the sport, so undesigned!
Her mother turned, and asked me gravely,
"What thought was passing through my mind?"

'Tis Love that blinds the eyes of mothers!
'Tis Love that makes the young maids fair!
She touched my hand; my rings she counted —
Yet never felt the shadows there!

Keep, gamesome Love, belovèd infant!
Keep ever thus all mothers blind:
And make thy dedicated virgins
In substance as in shadow kind!

HAPPY ARE THEY.

Happy are they who kiss thee, morn and even,
Parting the hair upon thy forehead white:
For them the sky is bluer and more bright,
And purer their thanksgivings rise to Heaven.
Happy are they to whom thy songs are given;
Happy are they on whom thy hands alight:
And happiest they for whom thy prayers at night
In tender piety so oft have striven.
Away with vain regrets and selfish sighs —
Even I, dear friend, am lonely, not unblest;
Permitted sometimes on that form to gaze,
Or feel the light of those consoling eyes —
If but a moment on my cheek it stays
I know that gentle beam from all the rest!

AFFLICTION.

Count each affliction, whether light or grave,
God's messenger sent down to thee. Do thou
With courtesy receive him: rise and bow:
And, ere his shadow pass thy threshold, crave

Permission first his heavenly feet to lave.
Then lay before him all thou hast. Allow
No cloud of passion to usurp thy brow,
Or mar thy hospitality; no wave
Of mortal tumult to obliterate
The soul's marmoreal calmness. Grief should be
Like joy, majestic, equable, sedate;
Confirming, cleansing, raising, making free;
Strong to consume small troubles; to commend
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the end.

BEATITUDE.

Blessed is he who hath not trod the ways
Of secular delights; nor learned the lore
Which loftier minds are studious to abhor.
Blessed is he who hath not sought the praise
That perishes, the rapture that betrays:
Who hath not spent in Time's vainglorious war
His youth: and found, a school-boy at fourscore,
How fatal are those victories which raise
Their iron trophies to a temple's height
On trampled Justice: who desires not bliss,
But peace; and yet when summoned to the fight,
Combats as one who combats in the sight
Of God and of His angels, seeking this
Alone, how best to glorify the Right.

THE MOOD OF EXALTATION.

What man can hear sweet sounds and dread to die?
O for a music that might last forever!
Abounding from its sources like a river
Which through the dim lawns streams eternally!
Virtue might then uplift her crest on high,
Spurning those myriad bonds that fret and grieve her:
Then all the powers of hell would quake and quiver
Before the ardors of her awful eye.
Alas for man with all his high desires,
And inward promptings fading day by day!
High-titled honor pants while it expires,
And clay-born glory turns again to clay.
Low instincts last: our great resolves pass by
Like winds whose loftiest pæan ends but in a sigh.

ALL THINGS SWEET WHEN PRIZED.

Sad is our youth, for it is ever going,
Crumbling away beneath our very feet:
Sad is our life, for onward it is flowing
In current unperceived, because so fleet:
Sad are our hopes, for they were sweet in sowing,
But tares, self-sown, have overtopped the wheat:
Sad are our joys, for they were sweet in blowing —
And still, oh still, their dying breath is sweet.
And sweet is youth, although it hath bereft us
Of that which made our childhood sweeter still:
And sweet is middle life, for it hath left us
A nearer good to cure an older ill:
And sweet are all things, when we learn to prize them
Not for their sake, but His who grants them or denies them!

CHARLES DICKENS.

THE IVY GREEN.

OH! a dainty plant is the Ivy green,
That creepeth o'er ruins old;
Of right choice food are his meals, I ween,
In his cell so lone and cold.
The walls must be crumbled, the stones decayed,
To pleasure his dainty whim;
And the mouldering dust that years have made
Is a merry meal for him.
Creeping where no life is seen,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Fast he stealeth on, though he wears no wings,
And a staunch old heart has he!
How closely he twineth, how tight he clings
To his friend, the huge oak tree!
And slyly he traileth along the ground,
And his leaves he gently waves,
And he joyously twines and hugs around
The rich mould of dead men's graves.
Creeping where no life is seen,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

Whole ages have fled, and their works decayed,
And nations scattered been;
But the stout old Ivy shall never fade
From its hale and hearty green.
The brave old plant in its lonely days
Shall fatten upon the past;
For the stateliest building man can raise
Is the Ivy's food at last.
Creeping where no life is seen,
A rare old plant is the Ivy green.

CHARLES M. DICKINSON.

THE CHILDREN.

WHEN the lessons and tasks are all ended,
And the school for the day is dismissed,
The little ones gather around me,
To bid me good-night and be kissed;
Oh, the little white arms that encircle
My neck in their tender embrace!
Oh, the smiles that are halos of heaven,
Shedding sunshine of love on my face!

And when they are gone I sit dreaming
Of my childhood too lovely to last;
Of joy that my heart will remember,
While it wakes to the pulse of the past,
Ere the world and its wickedness made me
A partner of sorrow and sin,
When the glory of God was about me,
And the glory of gladness within.

All my heart grows as weak as a woman's,
And the fountains of feeling will flow,
When I think of the paths steep and stony,
Where the feet of the dear ones must go;
Of the mountains of sin hanging o'er them,
Of the tempest of Fate blowing wild;
Oh! there's nothing on earth half so holy
As the innocent heart of a child!

They are idols of hearts and of households,
They are angels of God in disguise;
His sunlight still sleeps in their tresses,
His glory still gleams in their eyes;
Those truants from home and from heaven —
They have made me more manly and mild;
And I know now how Jesus could liken
The kingdom of God to a child!

I ask not a life for the dear ones,
All radiant, as others have done,
But that life may have just enough shadow
To temper the glare of the sun
I would pray God to guard them from evil,
But my prayer would bound back to myself;
Ah! a seraph may pray for a sinner,
But a sinner must pray for himself.

The twig is so easily bended,
I have banished the rule and the rod;
I have taught them the goodness of knowledge,
They have taught me the goodness of God;
My heart is the dungeon of darkness,
Where I shut them for breaking a rule:
My frown is sufficient correction;
My love is the law of the school.

I shall leave the old house in the autumn,
To traverse its threshold no more;
Ah! how I shall sigh for the dear ones,
That meet me each morn at the door!
I shall miss the "good-nights" and kisses,
And the gush of their innocent glee,
The group on the green, and the flowers
That are brought every morning for me.

I shall miss them at morn and at even,
Their song in the school and the street;
I shall miss the low hum of their voices,
And the tread of their delicate feet;
When the lessons of life are all ended,
And death says "The school is dismissed!"
May the little ones gather around me
To bid me "good-night" and be kissed!

MARY LOWE DICKINSON.

IF WE HAD BUT A DAY.

We should fill the hours with the sweetest things,
If we had but a day;
We should drink alone at the purest springs
In our upward way;
We should love with a lifetime's love in an hour,
If the hours were few;
We should rest, not for dreams, but for fresher power
To be and to do.

We should guide our wayward or wearied wills
By the clearest light;
We should keep our eyes on the heavenly hills,
If they lay in sight;
We should trample the pride and the discontent
Beneath our feet;
We should take whatever a good God sent,
With a trust complete.

We should waste no moments in weak regret,
If the day were but one;
If what we remember and what we forget
Went out with the sun;

We should be from our clamorous selves set free,
To work or to pray,
And to be what the Father would have us be,
If we had but a day.

SYDNEY THOMPSON DOBELL.

AMERICA.

Nor force nor fraud shall sunder us! O ye
Who north or south, on east or western lands,
Native to noble sounds, say truth for truth,
Freedom for freedom, love for love, and God
For God. O ye, who in eternal youth
Speak with a living and creative flood
This universal English, and do stand
Its breathing book; live worthy of that grand
Heroic utterance, — parted, yet a whole,
Far, yet unsevered,— children brave and free
Of the great mother-tongue, and ye shall be
Lords of an empire wide as Shakespeare's soul,
Sublime as Milton's immemorial theme,
And rich as Chaucer's speech, and fair as Spenser's dream.

HOME, WOUNDED.

. . . .

Stay wherever you will,
By the mount or under the hill,
Or down by the little river:
Stay as long as you please,
Give me only a bud from the trees,
Or a blade of grass in morning dew,
Or a cloudy violet clearing to blue,
I could look on it forever.

Wheel, wheel through the sunshine,
Wheel, wheel through the shadow;
There must be odors round the pine,
There must be balm of breathing kine,
Somewhere down in the meadow.
Must I choose? Then anchor me there
Beyond the beckoning poplars, where
The larch is snooding her flowery hair
With wreaths of morning shadow.
Among the thickest hazels of the brake
Perchance some nightingale doth shake
His feathers, and the air is full of song;
In those old days when I was young and strong,
He used to sing on yonder garden tree,
Beside the nursery.

. . . .

Along my life my length I lay,
I fill to-morrow and yesterday,
I am warm with the suns that have long since set,
I am warm with the summers that are not yet.
And like one who dreams and dozes
Softly afloat on a sunny sea,
Two worlds are whispering over me,
And there blows a wind of roses
From the backward shore to the shore before,
From the shore before to the backward shore,
And like two clouds that meet and pour
Each through each, till core in core
A single self reposes,
The nevermore with the evermore
Above me mingles and closes.

. . . .

AUSTIN DOBSON.

THE CHILD MUSICIAN.

He had played for his lordship's lévée,
He had played for her ladyship's whim,
Till the poor little head was heavy,
And the poor little brain would swim.

And the face grew peakèd and eerie,
And the large eyes strange and bright,
And they said,—too late,—"He is weary!
He shall rest for at least to-night!"

But at dawn, when the birds were waking,
As they watched in the silent room,
With the sound of a strained cord breaking,
A something snapped in the gloom.

'Twas a string of his violoncello,
And they heard him stir in his bed:
"Make room for a tired little fellow,
Kind God!" was the last that he said.

THE PRODIGALS.

"Princes!—and you, most valorous
Nobles and barons of all degrees!
Hearken awhile to the prayer of us,
Prodigals driven of destinies!
Nothing we ask of gold or fees;
Harry us not with the hounds, we pray;
Lo! for the surcote's hem we seize,
Give us, ah! give us,—but yesterday!

"Dames most delicate, amorous!
Damosels blithe as the belted bees!
Beggars are we that pray thee thus,
Beggars outworn of miseries!
Nothing we ask of the things that please;
Weary are we, and old, and gray:
Lo,—for we clutch and we clasp your knees,—
Give us, ah! give us,—but yesterday!

"Damosels, dames, be piteous!"
(But the dames rode fast by the roadway trees.)
"Hear us, O knights magnanimous!"
(But the knights pricked on in their panoplies.)
Nothing they gat of hope or ease,
But only to beat on the breast, and say,—
"Life we drank to the dregs and lees;
Give us, ah! give us,—but yesterday!"

ENVOY.

Youth, take heed to the prayer of these!
Many there be by the dusty way,—
Many that cry to the rocks and seas,
"Give us, ah! give us,—but yesterday!"

"FAREWELL, RENOWN!"

Farewell, Renown! Too fleeting flower,
That grows a year to last an hour;—
Prize of the race's dust and heat,
Too often trodden under feet,—
Why should I court your "barren dower"?

Nay; had I Dryden's angry power,—
The thews of Ben,—the wind of Gower,—
Not less my voice should still repeat
"Farewell, Renown!"

Farewell!—Because the Muses' bower
Is filled with rival brows that lower;—
Because, howe'er his pipe be sweet,
The Bard, that "pays," must please the street;—
But most . . . because the grapes are sour,—
Farewell, Renown!

MARY MAPES DODGE.

THE HUMAN TIE.

"As if life were not sacred, too."
GEORGE ELIOT.

"SPEAK tenderly! For he is dead," we say;
"With gracious hand smooth all his roughened past,
And fullest measure of reward forecast,
Forgetting naught that gloried his brief day."
Yet of the brother, who, along our way,
Prone with his burdens, heart-worn in the strife,
Totters before us — how we search his life,
Censure, and sternly punish, while we may.
Oh, weary are the paths of Earth, and hard!
And living hearts alone are ours to guard.
At least, begrudge not to the sore distraught
The reverent silence of our pitying thought.
Life, too, is sacred; and he best forgives
Who says: "He errs, but — tenderly! He lives."

MY WINDOW-IVY.

OVER my window the ivy climbs,
Its roots are in homely jars:
But all the day it looks at the sun,
And at night looks out at the stars.

The dust of the room may dim its green,
But I call to the breezy air:
"Come in, come in, good friend of mine!
And make my window fair."

So the ivy thrives from morn to morn,
Its leaves all turned to the light;
And it gladdens my soul with it tender green,
And teaches me day and night.

What though my lot is in lowly place,
And my spirit behind the bars;
All the long day I may look at the sun,
And at night look out at the stars.

What though the dust of earth would dim?
There's a glorious outer air
That will sweep through my soul if I let it in,
And make it fresh and fair.

Dear God! let me grow from day to day,
Clinging and sunny and bright!
Though planted in shade, Thy window is near,
And my leaves may turn to the light.

DEATH IN LIFE.

SHE sitteth there a mourner,
With her dead before her eyes;
Flushed with the hues of life is he
And quick are his replies.
Often his warm hand touches hers;
Brightly his glances fall;
And yet, in this wide world, is she
The loneliest of all.

Some mourners feel their dead return
In dreams, or thoughts at even;
Ah, well for them their best-beloved
Are faithful still in heaven!
But woe to her whose best beloved,
Though dead, still lingers near;
So far away when by her side,
He cannot see nor hear.

With heart intent, he comes, he goes
In busy ways of life.
His gains and chances counteth he;
His hours with joy are rife.

Careless he greets her day by day,
Nor thinks of words once said, —
Oh, would that love could live again,
Or her heart give up its dead!

HEART-ORACLES.

By the motes do we know where the sunbeam is slanting;
Through the hindering stones, speaks the soul of the brook;
Past the rustle of leaves we press into the stillness;
Through darkness and void to the Pleiads we look;
One bird-note at dawn with the night-silence o'er us,
Begins all the morning's munificent chorus.

Through sorrow come glimpses of infinite gladness;
Through grand discontent mounts the spirit of youth;
Loneliness foldeth a wonderful loving;
The breakers of Doubt lead the great tide of Truth:
And dread and grief-haunted the shadowy portal
That shuts from our vision the splendor immortal.

THE CHILD AND THE SEA.

One summer day, when birds flew high,
I saw a child step into the sea;
It glowed and sparkled at her touch
And softly plashed about her knee.
It held her lightly with its strength,
It kissed and kissed her silken hair;
It swayed with tenderness to know
A little child was in its care.

She, gleeful, dipped her pretty arms,
And caught the sparkles in her hands;
I heard her laughter, as she soon
Came skipping up the sunny sands.

"Is this the cruel sea?" I thought,
"The merciless, the awful sea?"—
Now hear the answer soft and true,
That rippled over the beach to me:

"Shall not the sea, in the sun, be glad
When a child doth come to play?
Had it been in the storm-time, what could I,
The sea, but bear her away —
Bear her away on my foaming crest,
Toss her and hurry her to her rest?

"Be it life or death, God ruleth me;
And he loveth every soul;
I've an earthly shore and a heavenly shore,
And toward them both I roll;
Shining and beautiful, both are they, —
And a little child will go God's way."

THE STARS.

They wait all day unseen by us, unfelt;
Patient they bide behind the day's full glare;
And we who watched the dawn when they were there,
Thought we had seen them in the daylight melt,
While the slow sun upon the earth-line knelt.
Because the teeming sky seemed void and bare,
When we explored it through the dazzled air,
We had no thought that there all day they dwelt.
Yet were they over us, alive and true,
In the vast shades far up above the blue, —
The brooding shades beyond our daylight ken —
Serene and patient in their conscious light
Ready to sparkle for our joy again,—
The eternal jewels of the short-lived night.

JULIA C. R. DORR.

WHAT SHE THOUGHT.

MARION showed me her wedding gown
And her veil of gossamer lace to-night,
And the orange-blooms that to-morrow morn
Shall fade in her soft hair's golden light.
But Philip came to the open door:
Like the heart of a wild-rose glowed her cheek,
And they wandered off through the garden paths
So blest that they did not care to speak.

I wonder how it seems to be loved:
To know you are fair in some one's eyes;
That upon some one your beauty dawns
Every day as a new surprise;
To know, that, whether you weep or smile,
Whether your mood be grave or gay,
Somebody thinks you, all the while,
Sweeter than any flower of May.

I wonder what it would be to love:
That, I think, would be sweeter far,
To know that one out of all the world
Was lord of your life, your king, your star.
They talk of love's sweet tumult and pain:
I am not sure that I understand,
Though,—a thrill ran down to my finger-tips
Once when,—somebody,—touched my hand!

I wonder what it would be to dream
Of a child that might one day be your own;
Of the hidden springs of your life a part,
Flesh of your flesh, and bone of your bone.
Marion stooped one day to kiss
A beggar's babe with a tender grace;
While some sweet thought, like a prophecy,
Looked from her pure Madonna face.

I wonder what it must be to think
To-morrow will be your wedding-day,
And you, in the radiant sunset glow
Down fragrant flowery paths will stray,
As Marion does this blessed night,
With Philip, lost in a blissful dream.
Can she feel his heart through the silence beat?
Does he see her eyes in the star-light gleam?

Questioning thus, my days go on;
But never an answer comes to me:
All love's mysteries, sweet as strange,
Sealed away from my life must be.
Yet still I dream, O heart of mine!
Of a beautiful city that lies afar;
And there, some time, I shall drop the mask,
And be shapely and fair as others are.

AT THE LAST.

WILL the day ever come, I wonder,
When I shall be glad to know
That my hands will be folded under
The next white fall of the snow?
To know that when next the clover
Wooeth the wandering bee,
Its crimson tide will drift over
All that is left of me?

Shall I ever be tired of living,
And be glad to go to my rest,
With a cool and fragrant lily
Asleep on my silent breast?

Will my eyes grow weary of seeing,
As the hours pass, one by one,
Till I long for the hush and the darkness
As I never longed for the sun?

God knoweth! Some time, it may be,
I shall smile to hear you say:
‘Dear heart! she will not waken
At the dawn of another day!”
And some time, love, it may be,
I shall whisper under my breath:
“The happiest hour of my life, dear,
Is this, — the hour of my death!”

WHAT NEED?

“What need has the singer to sing?
And why should your poet to-day
His pale little garland of poesy bring,
On the altar to lay?
High-priests of song the harp-strings swept
Ages before he smiled or wept!”

What need have the roses to bloom?
And why do the tall lilies grow?
And why do the violets shed their perfume
When night-winds breathe low?
They are no whit more bright and fair
Than flowers that breathed in Eden's air!

What need have the stars to shine on?
Or the clouds to grow red in the west,
When the sun, like a king, from the fields he has won,
Goes grandly to rest?
No brighter they than stars and skies
That greeted Eve's sweet, wondering eyes!

What need has the eagle to soar
So proudly straight up to the sun?
Or the robin such jubilant music to pour
When day is begun?
The eagles soared, the robins sung,
As high, as sweet, when earth was young!

What need, do you ask me? Each day
Hath a song and a prayer of its own,
As each June hath its crown of fresh roses, each May
Its bright emerald throne!
Its own high thought each age shall stir,
Each needs its own interpreter!

And thou, O, my poet, sing on!
Sing on until love shall grow old;
Till patience and faith their last triumphs have won,
And truth is a tale that is told!
Doubt not, thy song shall still be new
While life endures and God is true!

PERADVENTURE.

I am thinking to-night of the little child
That lay on my breast three summer days,
Then swiftly, silently, dropped from sight,
While my soul cried out in sore amaze.

It is fifteen years ago to-night;
Somewhere, I know, he has lived them through,
Perhaps with never a thought or dream
Of the mother-heart he never knew!

Is he yet but a babe? or has he grown
To be like his brothers, fair and tall,
With a clear bright eye, and a springing step,
And a voice that rings like a bugle call?

I loved him. The rose in his waxen hand
Was wet with the dew of my falling tears;
I have kept the thought of my baby's grave
Through all the length of these changeful years.

Yet the love I gave him was not like that
I give to-day to my other boys,
Who have grown beside me, and turned to me
In all their griefs and in all their joys.

Do you think he knows it? I wonder much
If the dead are passionless, cold and dumb;
If into the calm of the deathless years
No thrill of a human love may come!

Perhaps sometimes from the upper air
He has seen me walk with his brothers three;
Or felt in the tender twilight hour
The breath of the kisses they gave to me!

Over his birthright, lost so soon,
Perhaps he has sighed as the swift years flew;
O child of my heart! you shall find somewhere
The love that on earth you never knew!

THOU KNOWEST.

Thou knowest, O my Father! Why should I
Weary high heaven with restless prayers and tears!
Thou knowest all! My heart's unuttered cry
Hath soared beyond the stars and reached Thine ears.

Thou knowest,—ah, Thou knowest! Then what need,
O, loving God, to tell Thee o'er and o'er,
And with persistent iteration plead
As one who crieth at some closèd door?

"Tease not!" we mothers to our children say,—
"Our wiser love will grant whate'er is best."
Shall we, Thy children, run to Thee alway,
Begging for this and that in wild unrest?

I dare not clamor at the heavenly gate,
Lest I should lose the high, sweet strains within;
O, Love Divine! I can but stand and wait
Till Perfect Wisdom bids me enter in!

FIVE.

"But a week is so long!" he said,
With a toss of his curly head.
"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven!—
Seven whole days! Why, in six you know
(You said it yourself,—you told me so)
The great God up in heaven
Made all the earth and the seas and skies,
The trees and the birds and the butterflies!
How can I wait for my seeds to grow?"

"But a month is so long!" he said,
With a droop of his boyish head.
"Hear me count,—one, two, three, four,—
Four whole weeks, and three days more;
Thirty-one days, and each will creep
As the shadows crawl over yonder steep.
Thirty-one nights, and I shall lie
Watching the stars climb up the sky!
How can I wait till a month is o'er?'

"But a year is so long!" he said,
Uplifting his bright young head.

"All the seasons must come and go
Over the hill with footsteps slow,—
Autumn and winter, summer and spring;
Oh, for a bridge of gold to fling
Over the chasm deep and wide,
That I might cross to the other side,
Where she is waiting,—my love, my bride!"

"Ten years may be long," he said,
Slow raising his stately head,
"But there's much to win, there is much to lose;
A man must labor, a man must choose,
And he must be strong to wait!
The years may be long, but who would wear
The crown of honor, must do and dare!
No time has he to toy with fate
Who would climb to manhood's high estate!"

"Ah! life is not long!" he said,
Bowing his grand white head.
"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven!
Seven times ten are seventy.
Seventy years! as swift their flight
As swallows cleaving the morning light,
Or golden gleams at even.
Life is short as a summer night,—
How long, O God! is eternity?"

AT DAWN.

At dawn when the jubilant morning broke,
And its glory flooded the mountain side,
I said, "'Tis eleven years to-day,
Eleven years since my darling died!"

And then I turned to my household ways,
To my daily tasks, without, within,
As happily busy all the day
As if my darling had never been!

As if she had never lived, or died!
Yet when they buried her out of my sight,
I thought the sun had gone down at noon,
And the day could never again be bright.

Ah, well! As the swift years come and go,
It will not be long ere I shall lie
Somewhere under a bit of turf,
With my pale hands folded quietly.

And then some one who has loved me well,—
Perhaps the one who has loved me best,—
Will say of me as I said of her,
"She has been just so many years at rest,"—

Then turn to the living loves again,
To the busy life, without, within,
And the day will go on from dawn to dusk,
Even as if I had never been!

Dear hearts! dear hearts! It must still be so!
The roses will bloom, and the stars will shine,
And the soft green grass creep still and slow,
Sometime over a grave of mine,—

And over the grave in your hearts as well!
Ye cannot hinder it if ye would;
And I,—ah! I shall be wiser then,—
I would not hinder it if I could!

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE.

THE AMERICAN FLAG.

WHEN Freedom from her mountain height
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there;
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure, celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then from his mansion in the sun
She called her eagle-bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land.

Majestic monarch of the cloud!
Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,
To hear the tempest-trumpings loud,
And see the lightning lances driven,
When strive the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven;
Child of the sun! to thee 'tis given
To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur smoke,
To ward away the battle-stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory!

Flag of the brave! thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high,
When speaks the signal trumpet tone,
And the long line comes gleaming on;
Ere yet the life-blood, warm and wet,
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier eye shall brightly turn
To where thy sky-born glories burn,
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance;
And when the cannon-mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle-shroud,
And gory sabres rise and fall,
Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall;
Then shall thy meteor-glances glow,
And cowering foes shall sink beneath
Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death.

Flag of the seas! on ocean wave
Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave;
When death, careering on the gale,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,
And frighted waves rush wildly back
Before the broad-side's reeling rack,
Each dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye.

Flag of the free heart's hope and home,
By angel hands to valor given;
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.
For ever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us?

MICHAEL DRAYTON.

THE PARTING.

SINCE there's no help, come, let us kiss and part;
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart
That thus so cleanly I myself can free;
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows;
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.—
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes,
Now if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou might'st him yet recover.

◆

WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

DESPITE ALL.

I KNOW that all beneath the moon decays;
And what by mortals in this world is brought,
In time's great periods shall return to nought;
That fairest states have fatal nights and days.
I know that all the Muses' heavenly lays,
With toil of sprite which are so dearly bought,
As idle sounds, of few or none are sought;
That there is nothing lighter than vain praise.
I know frail beauty's like the purple flower
To which one morn oft birth and death affords;
That love a jarring is of mind's accords,
Where sense and will bring under reason's power:
Know what I list, this all cannot me move,
But that, alas! I both must write and love.

WHAT WE TOIL FOR.

OF mortal glory O soon darkened ray!
O wingèd joys of man, more swift than wind!
O fond desires, which in our fancies stray!
O traitorous hopes, which do our judgments blind!
Lo, in a flash that light is gone away
Which dazzle did each eye, delight each mind,
And, with that sun from whence it came combined,
Now makes more radiant Heaven's eternal day.
Let Beauty now bedew her cheeks with tears;
Let widowed Music only roar and groan;
Poor Virtue, get thee wings and mount the spheres,
For dwelling-place on earth for thee is none!
Death hath thy temple razed, Love's empire foiled,
The world of honor, worth, and sweetness spoiled.

JOHN DRYDEN.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST; OR, THE POWER OF MUSIC.

AN ODE IN HONOR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

'Twas at the royal feast, for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son:
Aloft in awful state
The godlike hero sate
On his imperial throne:
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound;
(So should desert in arms be crowned.)
The lovely Thais by his side,.
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS.

Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

Timotheus placed on high,
Amid the tuneful choir,
With flying fingers touched the lyre:
The trembling notes ascend the sky,
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above,
(Such is the power of mighty love.)
A dragon's fiery form belied the god:
Sublime on radiant spires he rode,
When he to fair Olympia pressed:
And while he sought her snowy breast:
Then round her slender waist he curled,
And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the world.
The listening crowd admire the lofty sound,
A present deity! they shout around:
A present deity! the vaulted roofs rebound.
With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS.

With ravished ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus — ever fair and ever young:
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets; beat the drums:
Flushed with a purple grace
He shows his honest face;
Now give the hautboys breath. He comes! he comes!
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings' are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

CHORUS.

Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure,
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

Soothed with the sound the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again;
And thrice he routed all his foes; and thrice he slew the slain.
The master saw the madness rise;
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And, while he heaven and earth defied,
Changed his hand, and checked his pride.
He chose a mournful muse
Soft pity to infuse:
He sung Darius, great and good;
By too severe a fate,
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And weltering in his blood;
Deserted, at his utmost need,
By those his former bounty fed;
On the bare earth exposed he lies,
With not a friend to close his eyes.
With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then a sigh he stole;
And tears began to flow.

CHORUS.

Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole;
And tears began to flow.

The mighty master smiled, to see
That love was in the next degree;
'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
War, he sung, is toil and trouble;
Honor but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying:
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, oh, think it worth enjoying:
Lovely Thais sits beside thee.
Take the good the gods provide thee.
The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS.

The prince, unabled to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
At length with love and wine at once oppressed,
The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

Now strike the golden lyre again:
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark, the horrid sound
Has raised up his head:
As awaked from the dead,
And amazed, he stares around.
Revenge! revenge! Timotheus cries,
See the furies arise!
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair!
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!

Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
And unburied remain,
Inglorious on the plain:
Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile gods
The princes applaud with a furious joy:
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy!

CHORUS,

And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy!

Thus long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
While organs yet were mute;
Timotheus, to his breathing flute,
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown;
He raised a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down.

GRAND CHORUS.

At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown;
He raised a mortal to the skies,
She drew an angel down.

A SONG FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

FROM harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
When nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
"Arise, ye more than dead."
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony.
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell?
When Jubal struck the corded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wondering, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound.
Less than a God they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell,
That spoke so sweetly and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

The trumpet's loud clangor
Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger,
And mortal alarms.
The double, double, double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries, "Hark! the foes come;
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat."

The soft complaining flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

Sharp violins complain
Their jealous pangs and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair disdainful dame.
But oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race;
And trees uprooted left their place,
Sequacious of the lyre:
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appeared
Mistaking earth for heaven.

GRAND CHORUS.

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the blessed above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky.

UNDER THE PORTRAIT OF JOHN MILTON.

[Prefixed to "Paradise Lost."]

Three poets in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England, did adorn,
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed;
The next in majesty; in both the last,
The force of nature could no further go;
To make a third, she joined the former two.

[*From Religio Laici.*]

THE LIGHT OF REASON.

Dim as the borrowed beams of moon and stars
To lonely, weary, wandering travellers,
Is reason to the soul: and as on high,
Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
Not light us here; so Reason's glimmering ray
Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day.
And as these nightly tapers disappear,
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere;
So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight;
So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light.

[*From Religio Laici.*]

THE BIBLE.

If on the book itself we cast our view,
Concurrent heathens prove the story true;
The doctrine, miracles; which must convince,
For Heaven in them appeals to human sense:
And though they prove not, they confirm the cause,
When what is taught agrees with nature's laws.
Then for the style, majestic and divine,
It speaks no less than God in every line:
Commanding words, whose force is still the same
As the first fiat that produced our frame.

All faiths beside, or did by arms ascend,
Or sense indulged has made mankind their friend;
This only doctrine does our lusts oppose:
Unfed by nature's soil, in which it grows;
Cross to our interests, curbing sense and sin;
Oppressed without, and undermined within,
It thrives through pain; its own tormentors tires;
And with a stubborn patience still aspires.
To what can Reason such effects assign
Transcending nature, but to laws divine?
Which in that sacred volume are contained;
Sufficient, clear, and for that use ordained.

[*From Religio Laici.*]

JUDGMENT IN STUDYING IT.

The unlettered Christian, who believes in gross,
Plods on to heaven, and ne'er is at a loss:
For the strait-gate would be made straiter yet,
Were none admitted there but men of wit.
The few by nature formed, with learning fraught,
Born to instruct, as others to be taught,
Must study well the sacred page: and see
Which doctrine, this or that, doth best agree
With the whole tenor of the work divine;
And plainliest points to Heaven's revealed design:
Which exposition flows from genuine sense;
And which is forced by wit and eloquence.

[*From Religio Laici.*]

THE AVOIDANCE OF RELIGIOUS DISPUTES.

A thousand daily sects rise up and die;
A thousand more the perished race supply;
So all we make of Heaven's discovered will.
Is, not to have it, or to use it ill.
The danger's much the same; on several shelves
If others wreck us, or we wreck ourselves.
What then remains, but, waiving each extreme,
The tide of ignorance and pride to stem?
Neither so rich a treasure to forego,
Nor proudly seek beyond our power to know:
Faith is not built on disquisitions vain:
The things we must believe are few and plain:
But since men will believe more than they need,
And every man will make himself a creed,
In doubtful questions 'tis the safest way
To learn what unsuspected ancients say:
For 'tis not likely we should higher soar
In search of Heaven, than all the Church before:
Nor can we be deceived, unless we see
The Scripture and the Fathers disagree.
If after all they stand suspected still,
(For no man's faith depends upon his will;)
'Tis some relief, that points not clearly known,
Without much hazard may be let alone:
And after hearing what our Church can say,
If still our reason runs another way,
That private reason 'tis more just to curb,
Than by disputes the public peace disturb.

For points obscure are of small use to learn;
But common quiet is mankind's concern.

[*From Eleonora.*]

A WIFE.

A wife as tender, and as true withal,
As the first woman was before her fall:
Made for the man, of whom she was a part;
Made to attract his eyes, and keep his heart.
A second Eve, but by no crime accursed;
As beauteous, not as brittle as the first.
Had she been first, still Paradise had been,
And death had found no entrance by her sin.
So she not only had preserved from ill
Her sex and ours, but lived their pattern still.

[*From Eleonora.*]

CHARITY.

Want passed for merit at her open door:
Heaven saw, he safely might increase his poor,
And trust their sustenance with her so well,
As not to be at charge of miracle.
None could be needy, whom she saw or knew;
All in the compass of her sphere she drew.
He, who could touch her garment, was as sure,
As the first Christians of the apostles' cure.
The distant heard, by fame, her pious deeds,
And laid her up for their extremest needs;
A future cordial for a fainting mind;
For, what was ne'er refused, all hoped to find,
Each in his turn, the rich might freely come,
As to a friend; but to the poor, 'twas home.
As to some holy house the afflicted came,
The hunger-starved, the naked and the lame;
Want and disease both fled before her name,
For zeal like hers her servants were too slow;
She was the first, where need required, to go;
Herself the foundress and attendant too.

[*From Eleonora.*]

BEAUTIFUL DEATH.

As precious gums are not for lasting fire,
They but perfume the temple, and expire:
So was she soon exhaled and vanished hence;
A short sweet odor of a vast expense.
She vanished, we can scarcely say she died:
For but a now did heaven and earth divide:
She passed serenely with a single breath;
This moment perfect health, the next was death:
One sigh did her eternal bliss assure;
So little penance needs, when souls are almost pure.
As gentle dreams our waking thoughts pursue;
Or, one dream passed, we slide into a new;
So close they follow, such wild order keep,
We think ourselves awake, and are asleep:
So softly death succeeded life in her:
She did but dream of heaven, and she was there.

No pains she suffered, nor expired with noise;
Her soul was whispered out with God's still voice;
As an old friend is beckoned to a feast,
And treated like a long-familiar guest.
He took her as he found, but found her so,
As one in hourly readiness to go:
E'en on that day, in all her trim prepared;
As early notice she from heaven had heard;
And some descending courier from above
Had given her timely warning to remove;
Or counselled her to dress the nuptial room.
For on that night the bridegroom was to come,
He kept his hour, and found her where she lay
Clothed all in white, the livery of the day;
Scarce had she sinned in thought, or word, or act;
Unless omissions were to pass for fact:
That hardly death a consequence could draw,
To make her liable to nature's law.
And, that she died, we only have to show
The mortal part of her she left below:
The rest, so smooth, so suddenly she went,
Looked like translation through the firmament.

[*From The Character of a Good Parson.*]

THE MODEL PREACHER.

YET of his little he had some to spare,
To feed the famished and to clothe the bare:
For mortified he was to that degree,
A poorer than himself he would not see.
True priests, he said, and preachers of the word,
Were only stewards of their sovereign Lord;
Nothing was theirs; but all the public store:
Intrusted riches, to relieve the poor.

. . . . .

The proud he tamed, the penitent he cheered;
Nor to rebuke the rich offender feared;
His preaching much, but more his practice wrought
(A living sermon of the truths he taught);
For this by rules severe his life he squared,
That all might see the doctrines which they heard.
For priests, he said, are patterns for the rest;
(The gold of heaven, who bear the God impressed);
But when the precious coin is kept unclean,
The sovereign's image is no longer seen.
If they be foul on which the people trust,
Well may the baser brass contract a rust.

[*From Absalom and Achitophel.*]

THE WIT.

A FIERY soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.
A daring pilot in extremity;
Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high
He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.
Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide.

WILLIAM DUNBAR.

ALL EARTHLY JOY RETURNS IN PAIN.

. . . . .

Have mind that age aye follows youth;
Death follows life with gaping mouth,
Devouring fruit and flowering grain
All earthly joy returns in pain.

Came never yet May so fresh and green,
But January came as wud and keen;
Was never such drout but ance came rain;
All earthly joy returns in pain,

Since earthly joy abydis never,
Work for the joy that lasts forever;
For other joy is all but vain:
All earthly joy returns in pain.

CHARLES GAMAGE EASTMAN.

A SNOW-STORM.

'Tis a fearful night in the winter time,
As cold as it ever can be;
The roar of the blast is heard like the chime
Of the waves of an angry sea.
The moon is full, but her silver light
The storm dashes out with its wings to-night;
And over the sky from south to north,
Not a star is seen as the wind comes forth
In the strength of a mighty glee.

All day had the snow come down—all day
As it never came down before;
And over the hills, at sunset, lay
Some two or three feet, or more;
The fence was lost, and the wall of stone;
The windows blocked and the well-curbs gone;
The haystack had grown to a mountain lift,
And the wood-pile looked like a monster drift,
As it lay by the farmer's door.

The night sets in on a world of snow,
While the air grows sharp and chill,
And the warning roar of a fearful blow
Is heard on the distant hill;
And the Norther, see! on the mountain peak
In his breath how the old trees writhe and shriek!
He shouts on the plain, ho ho! ho ho!
He drives from his nostrils the blinding snow,
And growls with a savage will.

Such a night as this to be found abroad,
In the drifts and the freezing air,
Lies a shivering dog, in the field, by the road,
With the snow in his shaggy hair.
He shuts his eyes to the wind and growls;
He lifts his head, and moans and howls;
Then crouching low, from the cutting sleet,
His nose is pressed on his quivering feet—
Pray what does the dog do there?

A farmer came from the village plain,
But he lost the travelled way;
And for hours he trod with might and main
A path for his horse and sleigh;

But colder still the cold winds blew,
And deeper still the deep drifts grew,
And his mare, a beautiful Morgan brown,
At last in her struggles floundered down,
  Where a log in a hollow lay.

In vain, with a neigh and a frenzied snort,
  She plunged in the drifting snow,
While her master urged, till his breath grew short,
  With a word and a gentle blow;
But the snow was deep, and the tugs were tight;
His hands were numb and had lost their might;
So he wallowed back to his half-filled sleigh,
And strove to shelter himself till day,
  With his coat and buffalo.

He has given the last faint jerk of the rein,
  To rouse up his dying steed;
And the poor dog howls to the blast in vain
  For help in his master's need.
For awhile he strives with a wistful cry
To catch a glance from his drowsy eye,
And wags his tail when the rude winds flap
The skirt of the buffalo over his lap,
  And whines that he takes no heed.

The wind goes down and the storm is o'er —
  'Tis the hour of midnight past;
The old trees writhe and bend no more
  In the whirl of the rushing blast.
The silent moon with her peaceful light
Looks down on the hills with snow all white,
And the giant shadow of Camel's Hump,
The blasted pine and the ghostly stump,
  Afar on the plain are cast.

But cold and dead by the hidden log
  Are they who came from the town:
The man in his sleigh, and his faithful dog,
  And his beautiful Morgan brown.
In the wide snow-desert, far and grand,
With his cap on his head and the reins in his hand,
The dog with his nose on his master's feet,
And the mare half seen through the crusted sleet,
  Where she lay when she floundered down.

GEORGE ELIOT (MARIAN EVANS CROSS).

O MAY I JOIN THE CHOIR INVISIBLE.

O MAY I join the choir invisible
Of these immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence; live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
Of miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge men's minds
To vaster issues.
                So to live is heaven:
To make undying music in the world,
Breathing a beauteous order, that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man.
So we inherit that sweet purity
For which we struggled, failed and agonized
With widening retrospect that bred despair.

Rebellious flesh that would not be subdued,
A vicious parent shaming still its child,
Poor anxious penitence, is quick dissolved;
Its discords quenched by meeting harmonies,
Die in the large and charitable air.
And all our rarer, better, truer self,
That sobbed religiously in yearning song,
That watched to ease the burden of the world,
Laboriously tracing what must be,
And what may yet be better,—saw within
A worthier image for the sanctuary,
And shaped it forth before the multitude,
Divinely human, raising worship so
To higher reverence more mixed with love,—
That better self shall live till human Time
Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky
Be gathered like a scroll within the tomb,
Unread forever.
This is life to come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious
For us, who strive to follow.
May I reach
That purest heaven,—be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty,
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense!
So shall I join the choir invisible,
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

JANE ELLIOT.

THE FLOWERS OF THE FOREST.

I'VE heard the lilting at our ewe-milking,
Lasses a-lilting before the dawn of day;
But now they are moaning on ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At buchts, in the morning, nae blithe lads are scorning,
The lasses are lonely, and dowie, and wae;
Nae daffin', nae gabbin', but sighing and sabbing,
Ilk ane lifts her leglen and hies her away.

In hairst, at the shearing, nae youths now are jeering,
The bandsters are lyart, and runkled, and gray;
At fair, or at preaching, nae wooing, nae fleeching—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

At e'en, at the gloaming, nae swankies are roaming,
'Bout stacks wi' the lasses at bogle to play;
But ilk ane sits drearie, lamenting her dearie—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

Dool and wae for the order sent our lads to the border
The English, for ance, by guile wan the day;
The Flowers of the Forest, that foucht aye the foremost,
The prime o' our land, are cauld in the clay.

We hear nae mair lilting at our ewe-milking,
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighing and moaning on ilka green loaning—
The Flowers of the Forest are a' wede away.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

POOR ANDREW.

The loving poor!—So envy calls
The ever-toiling poor:
But oh! I choke, my heart grows faint,
When I approach my door!
Behind it there are living things,
Whose silent frontlets say
They'd rather see me out than in,—
Feet foremost borne away!
My heart grows sick when home I come,—
May God the thought forgive!
If 'twere not for my dog and cat,
I think I could not live.

My dog and cat, when I come home,
Run out to welcome me,—
She mewing, with her tail on end,
While wagging his comes he.
They listen for my homeward steps,
My smothered sob they hear,
When down my heart sinks, deathly down,
Because my home is near.
My heart grows faint when home I come,—
May God the thought forgive!
If 'twere not for my dog and cat,
I think I could not live.

I'd rather be a happy bird,
Than, scorned and loathed, a king;
But man should live while for him lives
The meanest loving thing.
Thou busy bee! how canst thou choose
So far and wide to roam?
O blessed bee! thy glad wings say
Thou hast a happy home!
But I, when I come home,—O God!
Wilt thou the thought forgive?
If 'twere not for my dog and cat,
I think I could not live.

Why come they not? They do not come
My breaking heart to meet!
A heavier darkness on me falls,—
I cannot lift my feet.
Oh, yes, they come!—they never fail
To listen for my sighs;
My poor heart brightens when it meets
The sunshine of their eyes.
Again they come to meet me,—God!
Wilt thou the thought forgive?
If 'twere not for my dog and cat,
I think I could not live.

This heart is like a churchyard stone;
My home is comfort's grave;
My playful cat and honest dog
Are all the friends I have;
And yet my house is filled with friends,—
But foes they seem, and are.
What makes them hostile? IGNORANCE;
Then let me not despair.
But oh! I sigh when home I come,—
May God the thought forgive!
If 'twere not for my dog and cat,
I think I could not live.

THE PRESS.

God said,—"Let there be light!"
Grim darkness felt his might,
And fled away;
Then startled seas and mountains cold
Shone forth, all bright in blue and gold,
And cried,—"'Tis day! 'tis day!"
"Hail, holy light!" exclaimed
The thunderous cloud that flamed
O'er daisies white;

And lo! the rose, in crimson dressed,
Leaned sweetly on the lily's breast;
And, blushing, murmured,—"Light!"
Then was the skylark born;
Then rose the embattled corn;
Then floods of praise
Flowed o'er the sunny hills of noon;
And then, in stillest night, the moon
Poured forth her pensive lays.
Lo, heaven's bright bow is glad!
Lo, trees and flowers, all clad
In glory, bloom!
And shall the mortal sons of God
Be senseless as the trodden clod,
And darker than the tomb?
No, by the *mind* of man!
By the swart artisan!
By God, our sire!
Our souls have holy light within;
And every form of grief and sin
Shall see and feel its fire,
By earth, and hell, and heaven,
The shroud of souls is riven!
Mind, mind alone
Is light, and hope, and life, and power!
Earth's deepest night, from this blessed hour,
The night of minds, is gone!
"The Press!" all lands shall sing;
The Press, the Press we bring,
All lands to bless:
Oh, pallid Want! Oh, Labor stark!
Behold we bring the second ark!
The Press! the Press! the Press!

THE POET'S PRAYER.

Almighty Father! let thy lowly child,
Strong in his love of truth, be wisely bold,—
A patriot bard, by sycophants reviled,
Let him live usefully, and not die old!
Let poor men's children, pleased to read his lays,
Love, for his sake, the scenes where he hath been,
And when he ends his pilgrimage of days,
Let him be buried where the grass is green,
Where daisies, blooming earliest, linger late
To hear the bee his busy note prolong;
There let him slumber, and in peace await
The dawning morn, far from the sensual throng,
Who scorn the windflower's blush, the redbreast's lonely song.

NOT FOR NAUGHT.

Do and suffer naught in vain;
Let no trifle trifling be!
If the salt of life is pain,
Let even wrongs bring good to thee;
Good to others few or many,—
Good to all, or good to any.

If men curse thee, plant their lies
Where for truth they best may grow;
Let the railers make thee wise,
Preaching peace where'er thou go!
God no useless plant hath planted,
Evil — wisely used — is wanted.

If the nation-feeding corn
Thriveth under icèd snow;
If the small bird on the thorn
Useth well its guarded sloe,—
Bid thy cares thy comforts double,
Gather fruit from thorns of trouble.

See the rivers! how they run,
Strong in gloom, and strong in light!
Like the never-wearied sun,
Through the day and through the night,
Each along his path of duty,
Turning coldness into beauty.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

ODE.

O TENDERLY the haughty day
Fills his blue urn with fire;
One morn is in the mighty heaven,
And one in our desire.

The cannon booms from town to town,
Our pulses are not less,
The joy-bells chime their tidings down,
Which children's voices bless.

For he that flung the broad blue fold
O'er mantling land and sea,
One third part of the sky unrolled
For the banner of the free.

The men are ripe of Saxon kind
To build an equal state,—
To take the statute from the mind,
And make of duty fate.

United States! the ages plead,—
Present and past in under-song,—
Go put your creed into your deed,
Nor speak with double tongue.

For sea and land don't understand,
Nor skies without a frown
See rights for which the one hand fights
By the other cloven down.

Be just at home; then write your scroll
Of honor o'er the sea,
And bid the broad Atlantic roll
A ferry of the free.

And, henceforth, there shall be no chain,
Save underneath the sea
The wires shall murmur through the main
Sweet songs of Liberty.

The conscious stars accord above,
The waters wild below,
And under, through the cable wove,
Her fiery errands go.

For he that worketh high and wise,
Nor pauses in his plan,
Will take the sun out of the skies
Ere freedom out of man.

THE PROBLEM.

I LIKE a church; I like a cowl;
I love a prophet of the soul;
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles;
Yet not for all his faith can see
Would I that cowled churchman be.

Why should the vest on him allure,
Which I could not on me endure?

Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought,
Never from lips of cunning, fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below,—
The canticles of love and woe;
The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome,
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew;—
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

Knowest thou what wove yon wood-bird's nest
Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
Painting with morn each annual cell?
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds
To her old leaves new myriads?
Such and so grew these holy piles,
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.
Earth proudly wears the Parthenon
As the best gem upon her zone;

And morning opes with haste her lids,
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For out of thought's interior sphere,
These wonders rose to upper air;
And nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.

These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass.
The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
And the same power that reared the shrine
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.
Ever the fiery Pentecost
Girds with one flame the countless host,
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,
And through the priest the mind inspires.
The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by seers or sibyls told,
In groves of oak, or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind.
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.
I know what say the fathers wise,—
The Book itself before me lies,
Old Chrysostom, best Augustine,
And he who blent both in his line,
The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,
Taylor, the Shakespeare of divines.
His words are music in my ear,
I see his cowlèd portrait dear;
And yet, for all his faith could see,
I would not the good bishop be.

THE RHODORA.

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Dear, tell them, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, oh, rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew:
But in my simple ignorance, suppose
The selfsame power that brought me there, brought you.

THE HUMBLE-BEE.

Burly, dozing humble-bee,
Where thou art is clime for me,
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek;
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid-zone!
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
Let me chase thy waving lines:
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!
Sailor of the atmosphere;
Swimmer through the waves of air;
Voyager of light and noon;
Epicurean of June;
Wait, I prithee, till I come
Within earshot of thy hum,—
All without is martyrdom.

When the south-wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall,
And, with softness touching all,

Tints the human countenance
With a color of romance,
And, infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,
Thou, in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers:
Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap, and daffodils,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,
Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue,
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste,
All was picture as he passed.

Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher!
Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
Leave the chaff, and take the wheat.
When the fierce northwestern blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.

CONCORD FIGHT.

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid time and nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

FORBEARANCE.

Hast thou named all the birds without a gun?
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?
Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust?
And loved so well a high behavior,
In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,
Nobility more nobly to repay?
Oh, be my friend, and teach me to be thine!

FREDERIC WILLIAM FABER.

THE RIGHT MUST WIN.

OH, it is hard to work for God,
To rise and take his part
Upon this battle-field of earth,
And not sometimes lose heart!

He hides himself so wondrously,
As though there were no God;
He is least seen when all the powers
Of ill are most abroad.

Or he deserts us at the hour
The fight is all but lost;
And seems to leave us to ourselves
Just when we need him most.

Ill masters good, good seems to change
To ill with greatest ease;
And, worst of all, the good with good
Is at cross-purposes.

Ah! God is other than we think;
His ways are far above,
Far beyond reason's height, and reached
Only by childlike love.

Workman of God! oh, lose not heart,
But learn what God is like;
And in the darkest battle-field
Thou shalt know where to strike.

Thrice blest is he to whom is given
The instinct that can tell
That God is on the field when he
Is most invisible.

Blest, too, is he who can divine
Where real right doth lie,
And dares to take the side that seems
Wrong to man's blindfold eye.

For right is right, since God is God;
And right the day must win;
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin!

HARSH JUDGMENTS.

O GOD! whose thoughts are brightest light,
Whose love runs always clear,
To whose kind wisdom, sinning souls,
Amid their sins, are dear,—

Sweeten my bitter-thoughted heart
With charity like thine,
Till self shall be the only spot
On earth that does not shine.

Hard-heartedness dwells not with souls
Round whom thine arms are drawn;
And dark thoughts fade away in grace,
Like cloud-spots in the dawn.

Time was when I believed that wrong
In others to detect
Was part of genius, and a gift
To cherish, not reject.

Now, better taught by thee, O Lord!
This truth dawns on my mind,
The best effect of heavenly light
Is earth's false eyes to blind.

He whom no praise can reach is aye
Men's least attempts approving;
Whom justice makes all-merciful,
Omniscience makes all-loving.

When we ourselves least kindly are,
We deem the world unkind:
Dark hearts, in flowers where honey lies,
Only the poison find.

How Thou canst think so well of us,
Yet be the God Thou art,
Is darkness to my intellect,
But sunshine to my heart.

Yet habits linger in the soul;
More grace, O Lord! more grace;
More sweetness from thy loving heart,
More sunshine from thy face!

LOW SPIRITS.

Fever and fret and aimless stir
And disappointed strife,
All chafing, unsuccessful things,
Make up the sum of life.

Love adds anxiety to toil,
And sameness doubles cares,
While one unbroken chain of work
The flagging temper wears.

The light and air are dulled with smoke;
The streets resound with noise;
And the soul sinks to see its peers
Chasing their joyless joys.

Voices are round me; smiles are near;
Kind welcomes to be had;
And yet my spirit is alone,
Fretful, outworn, and sad.

A weary actor, I would fain
Be quit of my long part;
The burden of unquiet life
Lies heavy on my heart.

Sweet thought of God! now do thy work,
As thou hast done before;
Wake up, and tears will wake with thee,
And the dull mood be o'er.

The very thinking of the thought
Without or praise or prayer,
Gives light to know and life to do,
And marvellous strength to bear.

Oh, there is music in that thought,
Unto a heart unstrung,
Like sweet bells at the evening time,
Most musically rung.

'Tis not His justice or His power,
Beauty or blest abode,
But the mere unexpanded thought
Of the eternal God.

It is not of His wondrous works,
Not even that He is;
Words fail it, but it is a thought
Which by itself is bliss.

Sweet thought, lie closer to my heart!
Thus I may feel thee near,
As one who for his weapon feels
In some nocturnal fear.

Mostly in hours of gloom, thou com'st,
When sadness makes us lowly,
As though thou wert the echo sweet
Of humble melancholy.

I bless Thee, Lord, for this kind check
To spirits over-free'
And for all things that make me feel
More helpless need of Thee!

WILLIAM FALCONER.

[*From The Shipwreck.*]

WRECKED IN THE TEMPEST.

And now, while winged with ruin from on high,
Through the rent cloud the ragged lightnings fly,
A flash quick glancing on the nerves of light,
Struck the pale helmsman with eternal night:

. . . . . .

Quick to the abandoned wheel Arion came,
The ship's tempestuous sallies to reclaim.
Amazed he saw her, o'er the sounding foam
Upborne, to right and left distracted roam.
So gazed young Phaeton, with pale dismay,
When, mounted on the flaming car of day,

With rash and impious hand the stripling tried
The immortal coursers of the sun to guide.

. . . . . .

With mournful look the seamen eyed the strand,
Where death's inexorable jaws expand;
Swift from their minds elapsed all dangers past,
As, dumb with terror, they beheld the last.

. . . . . .

And now, lashed on by destiny severe,
With horror fraught the dreadful scene drew near!
The ship hangs hovering on the verge of death,
Hell yawns, rocks rise, and breakers roar beneath!
In vain, alas! the sacred shades of yore,
Would arm the mind with philosophic lore;
In vain they'd teach us, at the latest breath,
To smile serene amid the pangs of death.
Even Zeno's self, and Epictetus old,
This fell abyss had shuddered to behold.
Had Socrates, for godlike virtue famed,
And wisest of the sons of men proclaimed,
Beheld this scene of frenzy and distress,
His soul had trembled to its last recess!
O yet confirm my heart, ye powers above,
This last tremendous shock of fate to prove!
The tottering frame of reason yet sustain!
Nor let this total ruin whirl my brain!
In vain the cords and axes were prepared,
For now the audacious seas insult the yard;
High o'er the ship they throw a horrid shade,
And o'er her burst, in terrible cascade.
Uplifted on the surge, to heaven she flies,
Her shattered top half buried in the skies,
Then headlong plunging thunders on the ground,
Earth groans, air trembles, and the deeps resound!
Her giant bulk the dread concussion feels,
And quivering with the wound, in torment reels;

. . . . . .

Again she plunges; hark! a second shock
Tears her strong bottom on the marble rock!
Down on the vale of death, with dismal cries,
The fated victims shuddering roll their eyes
In wild despair; while yet another stroke,
With deep convulsion, rends the solid oak:
Till, like the mine, in whose infernal cell
The lurking demons of destruction dwell,
At length asunder torn her frame divides,
And crashing spreads in ruin o'er the tides.

[*From The Shipwreck.*]

A SUNSET PICTURE.

The sun's bright orb, declining all serene,
Now glanced obliquely o'er the woodland scene;
Creation smiles around; on every spray
The warbling birds exalt their evening lay;
Blithe skipping o'er yon hill, the fleecy train
Join the deep chorus of the lowing plain;
The golden lime and orange there were seen

On fragrant branches of perpetual green;
The crystal streams that velvet meadows lave,
To the green ocean roll with chiding wave.
The glassy ocean, hushed, forgets to roar;
But trembling, murmurs on the sandy shore;
And, lo! his surface lovely to behold,
Glows in the west, a sea of living gold!
While all above a thousand liveries gay
The skies with pomp ineffable array.
Arabian sweets perfume the happy plains;
Above, beneath, around, enchantment reigns
While glowing Vesper leads the starry train,
And Night slow draws her veil o'er land and main,
Emerging clouds the azure east invade,
And wrap the lucid spheres in gradual shade;
While yet the songsters of the vocal grove
With dying numbers tune the soul to love.

EDGAR FAWCETT.

IDEALS.

O SCIENCE, whose footsteps wander,
Audacious and unafraid,
Where the mysteries that men ponder
Lie folded in awful shade,
Though you bring us, with calm defiance,
Dear gifts from the bourns you wing,
There is yet, O undaunted Science,
One gift that you do not bring!

Shall you conquer the last restriction
That conceals it from you now,
And come back with its benediction
Like an aureole on your brow?
Shall you fly to us, roamer daring,
Past barriers of time and space,
And return from your mission bearing
The light of God on your face?

We know not, but still can treasure,
In the yearnings of our suspense,
Consolation we may not measure
By the certitudes of Sense.
For Life, as we long and question,
Seems to speak, while it hurries by,
Through undertones of suggestion
Immortality's deep reply.

To ears that await its token
Perpetually it strays,
Indeterminate, fitful, broken,
By the discords of our days.
It pierces the grim disasters
Of clamorous human Hate,
And its influence overmasters
All the ironies of Fate.

The icy laugh of the scorner
Cannot strike its echoes mute;
It cleaves the moan of the mourner
Like a clear æolian lute;
At its tone less clear and savage
Grows the anguish of farewell tears,
And its melody haunts the ravage
Of the desecrating years.

Philosophy builds, and spares not
Her firm, laborious power,
But her lordly edifice wears not
Its last aerial tower.
For the quarries of Reason fail her
Ere the structure's perfect scope,
And the stone that would now avail her
Must be hewn from heights of hope.

But Art, at her noblest glory,
Can seem, to her lovers fond,
As divinely admonitory
Of infinitudes beyond.

She can beam upon Earth's abasements
Like a splendor flung down sublime
Through vague yet exalted casements
From eternity into time.

On the canvas of some great painter
We may trace, in its varied flame,
Now leaping aloft, now fainter,
As the mood uplifts the aim,
That impulse by whose rare presence
His venturing brush has drawn
Its hues from the efflorescence
Of a far Elysian dawn.

An impassioned watcher gazes
Where the faultless curves combine
That sculpture's mightier phases
Imperially enshrine,
And he feels that by strange election
The artificer's genius wrought
From the marble a pale perfection
That is paramount over thought.

So at music entranced we wonder,
If its charm the spirit seeks,
When with mellow voluminous thunder
A sovereign maestro speaks,
Till it seems that by ghostly aidance
Upraised above lesser throngs,
He has caught from the stars their cadence
And woven the wind into songs.

More than all, if the stately brilliance
Of a poet's rapture rise,
Like a fountain whose full resilience
Is lovely against fair skies,
Are we thrilled with a dream unbounded
Of deeps by no vision scanned,
That conjecture has never sounded
And conception has never spanned.

So the harvest that knowledge misses,
Intuition seems to reap;
One pauses before the abysses
That one will delight to leap.
One balks the ruminant sages,
And one bids the world aspire,
While the slow processional ages
Irreversibly retire.

WOUNDS.

The night-wind sweeps its viewless lyre,
And o'er dim lands, at pastoral rest,
A single star's white heart of fire
Is throbbing in the amber west.

I track a rivulet, while I roam,
By banks that copious leafage cools,
And watch it roughening into foam,
Or deepening into glassy pools.

And where the shy stream gains a glade
That willowy thickets overwhelm,
I find a cottage in the shade
Of one high patriarchal elm.

Unseen, I mark, well bowered from reach,
A group the sloping lawn displays,
And more by gestures than by speech
I learn their converse while I gaze.

In curious band, youth, maid, and dame,
About his chair they throng to greet
A gaunt old man of crippled frame,
Whose crutch leans idle at his feet.

Girt with meek twilight's peaceful breath,
They hear of loud, tempestuous fray,
Of troops mown down like wheat by death,
Of red Antietam's ghastly day.

He tells of hurts that will not heal;
Of aches that nerve and sinew fret,
Where sting of shot and bite of steel
Have left their dull mementos yet;

And touched by pathos, filled with praise,
His gathered hearers closer press,
To pay alike in glance or phrase,
Response of pitying tenderness.

But I, who note their kindly will,
Look onward, past the box-edged walk,
Where stands a woman, grave and still,
Oblivious of their fleeting talk.

Her listless arms droop either side;
In pensive grace her brow is bent;
Her slender form leaves half-descried
A sweet fatigued abandonment.

And while she lures my musing eye,
The mournful reverie of her air
Speaks to my thought, I know not why,
In the stern dialect of despair.

Lone wistful moods it seems to show
Of anguish borne through laggard years,
With outward calm, with secret flow
Of unalleviating tears.

It breathes of duty's daily strife,
When jaded effort loathes to strive;
Of patience lingering firm, when life
Is tired of being yet alive.

Enthralled by this fair, piteous face,
While heaven is purpling overhead,
No more I heed the old soldier trace
How sword has cut, or bullet sped.

I dream of sorrow's noiseless fight,
Where no blades ring, no cannon roll,
And where the shadowy blows that smite
Give bloodless wounds that sear the soul;

Of fate unmoved by desperate prayers
From those its plunderous wrath lays low;
Of bivouacs where the spirit stares
At smouldering passion's faded glow;

And last, of that sad armistice made
On the dark field whence hope has fled,
Ere yet, like some poor ghost unlaid
Pale Memory glides to count her dead.

THE WOOD-TURTLE.

Girt with the grove's aerial sigh,
In clumsy stupor, deaf as fate,
Near this coiled, naked root you lie,
Imperviously inanimate.

Between these woodlands where we met,
And your grim languor, void of grace,
My glance, dumb sylvan anchoret,
Mysterious kinsmanship can trace.

For in your checkered shape are shown
The miry black of swamp and bog,
The tawny brown of lichened stone,
The inertness of the tumbled log.

But when you break this lifeless pause,
And from your parted shell outspread
A rude array of lumbering claws,
A length of lean, dark snaky head,

I watch from sluggish torpor start
These vital signs, uncouth and strange,
And mutely murmur to my heart:
"Ah me! how lovelier were the change,

"If yonder tough oak, seamed with scars,
Could give some white, wild form release,
With eyes amid whose wistful stars
Burned memories of immortal Greece!"

ANNA MARIA FAY.

SLEEP AND DEATH.

OFT see we in the garish round of day
A danger-haunted world for our sad feet,
Or fear we tread along the peopled street
A homeless path, an uncompanioned way.
So too the night doth bring its own array
Of darkling terrors we must singly meet,
Each soul apart in its unknown retreat,
With life a purposeless, unconscious play.
But though the day discovers us afraid,
Unsure of some safe hand to be our guide,
Rest we at night, as if for each were said,
"He giveth unto His belovèd sleep."
Nought less than all do we in sleep confide,
And death but needs of us a trust as deep.

RONDEL.

WHEN love is in her eyes,
What need of Spring for me?
A brighter emerald lies
On hill and vale and lea.
The azure of the skies
Holds nought so sweet to see,
When love is in her eyes,
What need of Spring for me?

Her bloom the rose outvies,
The lily dares no plea,
The violet's glory dies,
No flower so sweet can be;
When love is in her eyes,
What need of Spring for me?

◆

CORNELIUS GEORGE FENNER.

GULF-WEED.

A WEARY weed, tossed to and fro,
Drearily drenched in the ocean brine,
Soaring high and sinking low,
Lashed along without will of mine;
Sport of the spume of the surging sea;
Flung on the foam, afar and anear,
Mark my manifold mystery,—
Growth and grace in their place appear.

I bear round berries, gray and red,
Rootless and rover though I be;
My spangled leaves, when nicely spread,
Arboresce as a trunkless tree;
Corals curious coat me o'er,
White and hard in apt array;
'Mid the wild waves' rude uproar,
Gracefully grow I, night and day.

Hearts there are on the sounding shore,
Something whispers soft to me,
Restless and roaming for evermore,
Like this weary weed of the sea;
Bear they yet on each beating breast
The eternal type of the wondrous whole:
Growth unfolding amidst unrest,
Grace informing with silent soul.

ANNIE FIELDS.

TO SAPPHO.

DAUGHTER of Love! Out of the flowing river,
Bearing the tide of life upon its billow,
Down to that gulf where love and song together
Sink and must perish:
Out of that fatal and resistless current,
One little song of thine to thy great mother,
Treasured upon the heart of earth forever,
Alone is rescued.

Yet when spring comes, and weary is the spirit,
When love is here, but absent is the lover,
And life is here, and only love is dying,
Then turn we, longing,
Singer, to thee! Through ages unforgotten;
Where beats the heart of one who in her loving
Sang, all for love, and gave herself in singing
To the sea's bosom.

[*From The Last Contest of Æschylus.*]

YOUNG SOPHOCLES TAKING THE PRIZE FROM AGED ÆSCHYLUS.

BUT now the games succeeded, then a pause,
And after came the judges with the scrolls;
Two scrolls, not one, as in departed years.
And this saw none but the youth, Sophocles,
Who stood with head erect and shining eyes,
As if the beacon of some promised land
Caught his strong vision and entranced it there.
Then while the earth made mimicry of heaven
With stillness, calmly spake the mightiest judge:
"O Æschylus! The father of our song!
Athenian master of the tragic lyre
Thou the incomparable! Swayer of strong hearts!
Immortal minstrel of immortal deeds!
The autumn grows apace, and all must die;
Soon winter comes, and silence. Æschylus!
After that silence laughs the tuneful spring!
Read'st thou our meaning through this slender veil
Of nature's weaving? Sophocles, stand forth!
Behold Fame calls thee to her loftiest seat,
And bids thee wear her crown. Stand forth, I say!"
Then, like a fawn, the youthful poet sprang
From the dark thicket of new crowding friends,
And stood, a straight, lithe form with gentle mien,
Crowned first with light of happiness and youth.

But Æschylus, the old man, bending lower
Under this new chief weight of all the years,
Turned from that scene, turned from the shouting crowd,
Whose every voice wounded his dying soul
With arrows poison-dipped, and walked alone,
Forgotten, under plane-trees, by the stream.
"The last! The last! Have I no more to do
With this sweet world! Is the bright morning now
No longer fraught for me with crowding song?

Will evening bring no unsought fruitage home?
Must the days pass and these poor lips be dumb,
While strewing leaves sing falling through the air,
And autumn gathers in her richest fruit?
Where is my spring departed? Where, O gods!
Within my spirit still the building birds
I hear, with voice more tender than when leaves
Are budding and the happy earth is gay.
Am I, indeed, grown dumb for evermore!
Take me, O bark! Take me, thou flowing stream!
Who knowest nought of death save when thy waves
Rush to new life upon the ocean's breast.
Bear thou me singing to the under world!

. . . . .

[*From Sophocles.*]

AGED SOPHOCLES ADDRESSING THE ATHENIANS BEFORE READING HIS ŒDIPUS COLONEUS.

Bowed half with age and half with reverence, thus,
I, Sophocles, now answer to your call;
Questioned have I the cause and the reason learned.
Lo, I am here that all the world may see
These feeble limbs that signal of decay!
But, know ye, ere the aged oak must die,
Long after the strong years have bent his form,
The spring still gently weaves a leafy crown,
Fresh as of yore to deck his wintry head.
And now, O people mine, who have loved my song,
Ye shall be judges if the spring have brought
Late unto me, the aged oak, a crown.
Hear ye once more, ere yet the river of sleep
Bear me away far on its darkening tide,
The music breathed upon me from these fields.
If to your ears, alas! the shattered strings
No longer sing, but breathe a discord harsh,
I will return and draw this mantle close
About my head and lay me down to die.
But if ye hear the wonted spirit call,
Framing the natural song that fills this world
To a diviner form, then shall ye all believe
The love I bear to those most near to me
Is living still, and living cannot wrong;
To me, it seems, the love I bear to thee,
Athens, blooms fresh as violets in yon wood,
Making new spring within this aged breast.

AT THE FORGE.

. . . . .

I am Hephaistos, and forever here
Stand at the forge and labor, while I dream
Of those who labor not and are not lame.
I hear the early and the late birds call,
Hear winter whisper to the coming spring,
And watch the feet of summer dancing light
For joy across the bosom of the earth.
Labor endures, but all of these must pass!
And ye who love them best, nor are condemned

To beat the anvil through the summer day,
May learn the secret of their sudden flight;
No mortal tongue may whisper where they hide,
But to her love, half nestled in the grass,
Earth has been known to whisper low yet clear
Strange consolation for the wintry days.
Oh, listen then, ye singers! learn and tell
Those who must labor by the dusty way!

PASSAGE FROM THE PRELUDE.

. . . . .

O YOUTH of the world,
Thou wert sweet!
In thy bud
Slept nor canker nor pain;
In the blood
Of thy grape was no frost and no rain;
I love thee! I follow thy feet!
The youth of my heart,
And the deathless fire
Leap to embrace thee:
And nigher, and nigher,
Through the darkness of grief and the smart,
Thy form do I see.

But the tremulous hand of the years
Has brought me a friend.
Beautiful gift beyond price!
Beyond loss, beyond tears!
Hither she stands, clad in a veil.
O thou youth of the world!
She was a stranger to thee,
Thou didst fear her and flee.

Sorrow is her name;
And the face of Sorrow is pale;
But her heart is aflame
With a fire no winter can tame.
Her love will not bend
To the storm,
To the voices of pleasure,
Nor faint in the arms of the earth;
But she followeth ever the form
Of the Master whose promise is sure,
Who knows both our death and our birth.

. . . . .

JAMES THOMAS FIELDS.

MORNING AND EVENING BY THE SEA.

AT dawn the fleet stretched miles away
On ocean-plains asleep,—
Trim vessels waiting for the day
To move across the deep.
So still the sails they seemed to be
White lilies growing in the sea.

When evening touched the cape's low rim,
And dark fell on the waves,
We only saw processions dim
Of clouds, from shadowy caves;
These were the ghosts of buried ships
Gone down in one brief hour's eclipse!

THE PERPETUITY OF SONG.

IT was a blithesome young jongleur
Who started out to sing,
Eight hundred years ago, or more,
On a leafy morn in spring;
And he carolled sweet as any bird
That ever tried its wing.

Of love his little heart was full,—
Madonna! how he sang!
The blossoms trembled with delight,
And round about him sprang,
As forth among the banks of Loire
The minstrel's music rang.

The boy had left a home of want
To wander up and down,

And sing for bread and nightly rest
In many an alien town,
And bear whatever lot befell,—
The alternate smile and frown.

The singer's carolling lips are dust,
And ages long since then
Dead kings have lain beside their thrones,
Voiceless as common men,—
But Gerald's songs are echoing still
Through every mountain glen!

IN EXTREMIS.

Oh, the soul-haunting shadows when low he'll lie dying,
And the dread angel's voice for his spirit is crying!
Where will his thoughts wander, just before sleeping,
When a chill from the dark o'er his forehead is creeping?
Will he go on beguiling,
And wantonly smiling?

'Tis June with him now, but quick cometh December;
There's a broken heart somewhere for him to remember,
And sure as God liveth, for all his gay trolling,
The bell for his passing one day will be tolling!
Then no more beguiling,
False vowing and smiling!

A PROTEST.

Go, sophist! dare not to despoil
My life of what it sorely needs
In days of pain, in hours of toil,—
The bread on which my spirit feeds.

You see no light beyond the stars,
No hope of lasting joys to come?
I feel, thank God, no narrow bars
Between me and my final home!

Hence with your cold sepulchral bans,—
The vassal doubts Unfaith has given!
My childhood's heart within the man's
Still whispers to me, "Trust in Heaven!"

COURTESY.

How sweet and gracious, even in common speech,
Is that fine sense which men call Courtesy!
Wholesome as air and genial as the light,
Welcome in every clime as breath of flowers,—
It transmutes aliens into trusting friends,
And gives its owner passport round the globe.

A CHARACTER.

O happiest he, whose riper years retain
The hopes of youth, unsullied by a stain!
His eve of life in calm content shall glide,
Like the still streamlet to the ocean tide:
No gloomy cloud hangs o'er his tranquil day;
No meteor lures him from his home astray;
For him there glows with glittering beam on high
Love's changeless star that leads him to the sky;
Still to the past he sometimes turns to trace
The mild expression of a mother's face,
And dreams, perchance, as oft in earlier years,
The low, sweet music of her voice he hears.

FIRST APPEARANCE AT THE ODÉON.

"I AM Nicholas Tacchinardi,— hunchbacked, look you, and a fright;
Caliban himself might never interpose so foul a sight.
Granted; but I come not, masters, to exhibit form or size.
Gaze not on my limbs, good people; lend your *ears*, and not your *eyes*.
I'm a *singer*, not a *dancer*,— spare me for a while your din;
Let me try my voice to-night here,— keep your jests till I begin.
Have the kindness but to listen,— this is all I dare to ask.
See, I stand beside the footlights, waiting to begin my task.
If I fail to please you, curse me,— not *before* my voice you hear,
Thrust me not from the Odéon. Hearken, and I've naught to fear."

Then the crowd in pit and boxes jeered the dwarf, and mocked his shape;
Called him "monster," "thing abhorrent," crying, "Off, presumptuous ape
Off, unsightly, baleful creature! off, and quit the insulted stage!
Move aside, repulsive figure, or deplore our gathering rage."

Bowing low, pale Tacchinardi, long accustomed to such threats,
Burst into a grand bravura, showering notes like diamond jets,—
Sang until the ringing plaudits through the wide Odéon rang,—
Sang as never soaring tenor ere behind those footlights sang;
And the hunchback, ever after, like a god was hailed with cries,—
"*King of minstrels, live forever! Shame on fools who have but eyes!*"

FRANCIS MILES FINCH.

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY.

BY the flow of the inland river;
Whence the fleets of iron had fled.
Where the blades of the grave-grass quiver,
Asleep are the ranks of the dead:
Under the sod and the dew;
Waiting the Judgment-Day;
Under the one, the Blue;
Under the other, the Gray.

These in the robings of glory,
Those in the gloom of defeat;
All with the battle-blood gory,
In the dusk of eternity meet;
Under the sod and the dew;
Waiting the Judgment-Day;
Under the laurel, the Blue;
Under the willow, the Gray.

From the silence of sorrowful hours
The desolate mourners go,
Lovingly laden with flowers,
Alike for the friend and the foe;
Under the sod and the dew;
Waiting the Judgment-Day;
Under the laurel, the Blue;
Under the willow, the Gray.

So, with an equal splendor,
The morning sun-rays fall,
With a touch impartially tender,
On the blossoms blooming for all;
Under the sod and the dew;
Waiting the Judgment-Day;
Broidered with gold, the Blue;
Mellowed with gold, the Gray

So, when the summer calleth
On forest and field of grain,
With an equal murmur falleth
The cooling drip of the rain;
Under the sod and the dew;
Waiting the Judgment-Day;
Wet with the rain, the Blue;
Wet with the rain, the Gray.

Sadly, but not with upbraiding,
  The generous deed was done;
In the storm of the years, now fading,
  No braver battle was won;
    Under the sod and the dew:
      Waiting the Judgment-Day;
    Under the blossoms, the Blue,
      Under the garlands, the Gray.

No more shall the war-cry sever,
  Or the winding rivers be red;
They banish our anger forever
  When they laurel the graves of our dead.
    Under the sod and the dew;
      Waiting the Judgment-Day;
    Love and tears for the Blue;
      Tears and love for the Gray.

PHILIP FRENEAU.

MAY TO APRIL.

    WITHOUT your showers
    I breed no flowers;
Each field a barren waste appears;
    If you don't weep,
    My blossoms sleep,
They take such pleasure in your tears.

    As your decay
    Made room for May,
So I must part with all that's mine;
    My balmy breeze,
    My blooming trees,
To torrid zones their sweets resign.

    For April dead
    My shades I spread,
To her I owe my dress so gay;
    Of daughters three
    It falls on me
To close our triumphs in one day.

    Thus to repose
    All nature goes;
Month after month must find its doom;
    Time on the wing,
    May ends the spring,
And summer frolics o'er her tomb.

WILLIAM CHANNING GANNETT.

LISTENING FOR GOD.

I HEAR it often in the dark,
  I hear it in the light,—
Where is the voice that calls to me
  With such a quiet might?
It seems but echo to my thought,
  And yet beyond the stars;
It seems a heart-beat in a hush,
  And yet the planet jars.

Oh, may it be that far within
  My inmost soul there lies
A spirit-sky, that opens with
  Those voices of surprise?
And can it be, by night and day,
  That firmament serene
Is just the heaven where God himself,
  The Father, dwells unseen?

Oh, God within, so close to me
  That every thought is plain,
Be judge, be friend, be Father still,
  And in thy heaven reign!
Thy heaven is mine, — my very soul!
  Thy words are sweet and strong;
They fill my inward silences
  With music and with song.

They send me challenges to right,
  And loud rebuke my ill;
They ring my bells of victory,
  They breathe my "Peace, be still!"
They ever seem to say, "My child;
  Why seek me so all day?
Now journey inward to thyself,
  And listen by the way."

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

THE FREE MIND.

HIGH walls and huge the body may confine,
And iron gates obstruct the prisoner's gaze,
And massive bolts may baffle his design,
And vigilant keepers watch his devious ways;
But scorns the immortal mind such base control;
No chains can bind it and no cell enclose.
Swifter than light it flies from pole to pole,
And in a flash from earth to heaven it goes.
It leaps from mount to mount, from vale to vale
It wanders plucking honeyed fruits and flowers;
It visits home to hear the fireside tale
And in sweet converse pass the joyous hours;
'Tis up before the sun, roaming afar,
And in its watches wearies every star.

FRANK H. GASSAWAY.

BAY BILLY.

'TWAS the last fight at Fredericksburg,—
Perhaps the day you reck,
Our boys, the Twenty-Second Maine,
Kept Early's men in check.
Just where Wade Hampton boomed away
The fight went neck and neck.

All day the weaker wing we held,
And held it with a will.
Five several stubborn times we charged
The battery on the hill,
And five times beaten back, re-formed,
And kept our column still.

At last from out the centre fight.
Spurred up a general's aid.
"That battery must silenced be!"
He cried, as past he sped.
Our colonel simply touched his cap,
And then, with measured tread,

To lead the crouching line once more
The grand old fellow came.
No wounded man but raised his head
And strove to gasp his name,
And those who could not speak nor stir,
"God blessed him" just the same.

For he was all the world to us,
That hero gray and grim.
Right well we knew that fearful slope
We'd climb with none but him,
Though while his white head led the way
We'd charge hell's portals in.

This time we were not half-way up,
When, midst the storm of shell,
Our leader, with his sword upraised,
Beneath our bayonets fell.
And, as we bore him back, the foe
Set up a joyous yell.

Our hearts went with him. Back we swept,
And when the bugle said
"Up, charge, again!" no man was there
But hung his doggèd head.
"We've no one left to lead us now,"
The sullen soldiers said.

Just then before the laggard line
The colonel's horse we spied,

Bay Billy with his trappings on,
His nostrils swelling wide,
As though still on his gallant back
The master sat astride.

Right royally he took the place
That was of old his wont,
And with a neigh that seemed to say,
Above the battle's brunt,
"How can the Twenty-Second charge
If I am not in front?"

Like statues rooted there we stood,
And gazed a little space,
Above that floating mane we missed
The dear familiar face,
But we saw Bay Billy's eye of fire,
And it gave us heart of grace.

No bugle-call could rouse us all
As that brave sight had done,
Down all the battered line we felt
A lightning impulse run.
Up! up the hill we followed Bill,
And we captured every gun!

And when upon the conquered height
Died out the battle's hum,
Vainly mid living and the dead
We sought our leader dumb.
It seemed as if a spectre steed
To win that day had come.

And then the dusk and dew of night
Fell softly o'er the plain,
As though o'er man's dread work of death
The angels wept again,
And drew night's curtain gently round
A thousand beds of pain.

All night the surgeons' torches went,
The ghastly rows between,—
All night with solemn step I paced
The torn and bloody green.
But who that fought in the big war
Such dread sights have not seen?

At last the morning broke. The lark
Sang in the merry skies,
As if to e'en the sleepers there
It bade awake, and rise!
Though naught but that last trump of all
Could ope their heavy eyes.

And then once more with banners gay,
Stretched out the long brigade.
Trimly upon the furrowed field
The troops stood on parade,
And bravely mid the ranks were closed
The gaps the fight had made.

Not half the Twenty-Second's men
Were in their place that morn;
And Corporal Dick, who yester-noon
Stood six brave fellows on,
Now touched my elbow in the ranks,
For all between were gone.

Ah! who forgets that dreary hour
When, as with misty eyes,
To call the old familiar roll
The solemn sergeant tries,—
One feels that thumping of the heart
As no prompt voice replies.

And as in faltering tone and slow
The last few names were said,
Across the field some missing horse
Toiled up the weary tread,
It caught the sergeant's eye, and quick
Bay Billy's name he read.

Yes! there the old bay hero stood,
All safe from battle's harms,
And ere an order could be heard,
Or the bugle's quick alarms,
Down all the front, from end to end,
The troops presented arms!

Not all the shoulder-straps on earth
Could still our mighty cheer;
And ever from that famous day,
When rang the roll call clear,
Bay Billy's name was read, and then
The whole line answered, "Here!"

RICHARD WATSON GILDER.

THERE IS NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN.

THERE is nothing new under the sun;
  There is no new hope or despair;
The agony just begun
  Is as old as the earth and the air.
My secret soul of bliss
  Is one with the singing star's,
And the ancient mountains miss
  No hurt that my being mars.

I know as I know my life,
  I know as I know my pain,
That there is no lonely strife,
  That he is mad who would gain
A separate balm for his woe,
  A single pity and cover:
The one great God I know
  Hears the same prayer over and over.

I know it because at the portal
  Of heaven I bowed and cried,
And I said, "Was ever a mortal
  Thus crowned and crucified!
My praise thou hast made my blame;
  My best thou hast made my worst;
My good thou hast turned to shame;
  My drink is a flaming thirst."

But scarce my prayer was said
  Ere from that place I turned;
I trembled, I hung my head,
  My cheek, shame-smitten, burned;
For there where I bowed down
  In my boastful agony,
I thought of thy cross and crown,—
  O Christ! I remembered thee.

THE SOWER.

A SOWER went forth to sow,
His eyes were dark with woe;
He crushed the flowers beneath his feet,
Nor smelt the perfume warm and sweet,
That prayed for pity everywhere.
He came to a field that was harried
By iron, and to heaven laid bare:
He shook the seed that he carried
O'er that brown and bladeless place.
He shook it, as God shakes hail
Over a doomèd land,
When lightnings interlace
The sky and the earth, and his wand
Of love is a thunder flail.

  Thus did that sower sow;
His seed was human blood,
And tears of women and men.
And I, who near him stood,
Said: When the crop comes, then
There will be sobbing and sighing,
Weeping and wailing and crying,
Flame and ashes and woe.

It was an autumn day
When next I went that way.
And what, think you, did I see?
What was it that I heard?
The song of a sweet-voiced bird?
Nay — but the songs of many,
Thrilled through with praise and prayer.
Of all those voices not any
Were sad of memory:
And a sea of sunlight flowed,
And a golden harvest glowed!
On my face I fell down there;
And I said: Thou only art wise —
God of the earth and skies!
And I thank thee, again and again,
For the sower whose name is Pain.

WEAL AND WOE.

O HIGHEST, strongest, sweetest woman-soul!
  Thou holdest in the compass of thy grace
  All the strange fate and passion of thy race;
  Of the old, primal curse thou knowest the whole:
Thine eyes, too wise, are heavy with the dole,
  The doubt, the dread of all this human maze;

Thou in the virgin morning of thy days
Hast felt the bitter waters o'er thee roll.
Yet thou knowest, too, the terrible delight,
The still content, and solemn ecstasy;
Whatever sharp, sweet bliss thy kind may know.
Thy spirit is deep for pleasure as for woe —
Deep as the rich, dark-caverned, awful sea
That the keen-winded, glimmering dawn makes white.

TWO LOVE QUATRAINS.

NOT from the whole wide world I choose thee —
Sweetheart, light of the land and the sea!
The wide, wide world could not enclose thee,
For thou art the whole wide world to me.

YEARS have flown since I knew thee first,
And I know thee as water is known of thirst:
Yet I knew thee of old at the first sweet sight,
And thou art strange to me, love, to-night.

WHAT WOULD I SAVE THEE FROM.

WHAT would I save thee from, dear heart, dear heart?
Not from what heaven may send thee of its pain;
Not from fierce sunshine or the scathing rain:
The pang of pleasure; passion's wound and smart;
Not from the scorn and sorrow of thine art;
Nor loss of faithful friends, nor any gain
Of growth by grief. I would not thee restrain
From needful death. But oh, thou other part
Of me! — through whom the whole world I behold,
As through the blue I see the stars above!
In whom the world I find, hid fold on fold!
Thee would I save from this — nay, do not move!
Fear not, it may not flash, the air is cold;
Save thee from this — the lightning of my love.

I COUNT MY TIME BY TIMES THAT I MEET THEE.

I COUNT my time by times that I meet thee;
These are my yesterdays, my morrows, noons,
And nights; these my old moons and my new moons.
Slow fly the hours, or fast the hours do flee,
If thou art far from or art near to me:
If thou art far, the birds' tunes are no tunes;
If thou art near, the wintry days are Junes,—
Darkness is light, and sorrow can not be.
Thou art my dream come true, and thou my dream,
The air I breathe, the world wherein I dwell;
My journey's end thou art, and thou the way;
Thou art what I would be, yet only seem;
Thou art my heaven and thou art my hell;
Thou art my ever-living judgment-day.

LOVE'S JEALOUSY.

Of other men I know no jealousy,
Nor of the maid who holds thee close, oh, close:
But of the June-red, summer-scented rose,
And of the orange-streakèd sunset sky
That wins the soul of thee through thy deep eye;
And of the breeze by thee beloved, that goes
O'er thy dear hair and brow; the song that flows
Into thy heart of hearts, where it may die.
I would I were one moment that sweet show
Of flower; or breeze beloved that toucheth all;
Or sky that through the summer eve doth burn.
I would I were the song thou lovest so,
At sound of me to have thine eyelid fall:
But I would then to something human turn.

A THOUGHT.

Once, looking from a window on a land
That lay in silence underneath the sun;
A land of broad, green meadows, through which poured
Two rivers, slowly winding to the sea,—
Thus, as I looked, I know not how or whence,
Was borne into my unexpectant soul
That thought, late learned by anxious-witted man,
The infinite patience of the Eternal Mind.

AND WERE THAT BEST?

And were that best, Love, dreamless, endless sleep?
Gone all the fury of the mortal day;
The daylight gone, and gone the starry ray!
And were that best, Love, rest serene and deep?
Gone labor and desire; no arduous steep
To climb, no songs to sing, no prayers to pray,
No help for those who perish by the way,
No laughter 'midst our tears, no tears to weep!
And were that best, Love, sleep with no dear dream,
Nor memory of any thing in life?
Stark death that neither help nor hurt can know!
Oh, rather, Love, the sorrow-bringing gleam,
The living day's long agony and strife!
Rather strong love in pain,—the waking woe!

THROUGH LOVE TO LIGHT.

Through love to light! Oh, wonderful the way
That leads from darkness to the perfect day!
From darkness and from sorrow of the night
To morning that comes singing o'er the sea.
Through love to light! Through light, O God, to thee,
Who art the love of love, the eternal light of light!

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

[*From The Deserted Village.*]

THE VILLAGE PREACHER.

NEAR yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild.
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place;
Unskilful he to fawn, or seek for power
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour;
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize —
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train;
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain.
The long-remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard, descending, swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud.
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sate by his fire, and talked the night away —
Wept o'er his wounds, or, tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were won.
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave, ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side;
But in his duty, prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all;
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man,
With ready zeal, each honest rustic ran;
E'en children followed, with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest;

Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed;
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given —
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

[*From The Deserted Village.*]

THE VILLAGE SCHOOLMASTER.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossomed furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school.
A man severe he was, and stern to view —
I knew him well, and every truant knew;
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed, with counterfeited glee,
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper, circling round,
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned;
Yet he was kind — or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault.
The village all declared how much he knew;
'T was certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
And e'en the story ran that he could gauge.
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill,
For, e'en though vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learnèd length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.

[*From The Deserted Village.*]

THE HAPPINESS OF PASSING ONE'S AGE IN FAMILIAR PLACES.

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs — and God has given my share —
I still had hopes my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose;
I still had hopes — for pride attends us still —
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw;
And, as a hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants to the place from whence at first she flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return — and die at home at last.

O blest retirement! friend to life's decline!
Retreat from care, that never must be mine!

How blest is he who crowns, in shades like these,
A youth of labor, with an age of ease;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 't is hard to combat, learns to fly!
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep;
No surly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend;
Sinks to the grave with unperceived decay.
While resignation gently slopes the way;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences, ere the world be past.

[*From The Traveller.*]

FRANCE.

Gay sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleased with thyself, whom all the world can please,
How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire!
Where shading elms along the margin grew,
And freshened from the wave the zephyr flew;
And haply, though my harsh touch, faltering still,
But mocked all tune, and marred the dancer's skill,
Yet would the village praise my wondrous power,
And dance, forgetful of the noontide hour.
Alike all ages: dames of ancient days
Have led their children through the mirthful maze,
And the gay grandsire, skilled in gestic lore,
Has frisked beneath the burden of threescore.
So blest a life these thoughtless realms display,
Thus idly busy rolls their world away:
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honor forms the social temper here:
Honor, that praise which real merit gains
Or e'en imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current; paid from hand to hand,
It shifts in splendid traffic round the land:
From courts, to camps, to cottages it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise;
They please, are pleased, they give to get esteem.
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.
But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies also room to rise;
For praise too dearly loved, or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought;
And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.
Hence Ostentation here, with tawdry art,
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart;
Here Vanity assumes her pert grimace,
And trims her robe of frieze with copper lace;
Here beggar Pride defrauds her daily cheer,
To boast one splendid banquet once a year;
The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws
Nor weighs the solid worth of self-applause.

[From The Oratorio of the Captivity.]

HOPE.

The wretch condemned with life to part,
Still, still on hope relies;
And every pang that rends the heart,
Bids expectation rise.

Hope, like the glimmering taper's light,
Adorns and cheers the way;
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter day.

[From the Oratorio of the Captivity.]

THE PROPHETS' SONG.

Our God is all we boast below,
To Him we turn our eyes;
And every added weight of woe,
Shall make our homage rise.

And though no temple richly dressed,
Nor sacrifice is here;
We'll make His temple in our breast,
And offer up a tear.

[From The Oratorio of the Captivity.]

MEMORY.

O **Memory**! thou fond deceiver,
Still importunate and vain,
To former joys recurring ever,
And turning all the past to pain!

Then, like the world, the oppressed oppressing,
Thy smiles increase the wretch's woe;
And he who wants each other blessing,
In thee must ever find a foe.

DORA READ GOODALE.

RIPE GRAIN.

O **still**, white face of perfect peace,
Untouched by passion, freed from pain,—
He who ordained that work should cease,
Took to Himself the ripened grain.

O noble face! your beauty bears
The glory that is wrung from pain,
The high celestial beauty wears
Of finished work, of ripened grain.

Of human care you left no trace,
No lightest trace of grief or pain,—
On earth an empty form and face —
In Heaven stands the ripened grain.

ELAINE GOODALE.

ASHES OF ROSES.

Soft on the sunset sky
Bright daylight closes,
Leaving, when light doth die,
Pale hues that mingling lie,—
Ashes of roses.

When Love's warm sun is set,
Love's brightness closes;
Eyes with hot tears are wet,
In hearts then linger yet
Ashes of roses.

HANNAH FLAGG GOULD.

THE SOUL'S FAREWELL.

IT must be so, poor, fading, mortal thing!
And now we part, thou pallid form of clay!
Thy hold is broken — I unfurl my wing;
And from the dust the spirit must away!

As thou at night, hast thrown thy vesture by,
Tired with the day, to seek thy wonted rest,
Fatigued with time's vain round, 't is thus that I
Of thee, frail covering, myself divest.

Thou knowest, while journeying in this thorny road,
How oft we've sighed and struggled to be twain;
How I have longed to drop my earthly load,
And thou, to rest thee from thy toil and pain.

Then he, who severs our mysterious tie,
Is a kind angel, granting each release;
He'll seal thy quivering lip and sunken eye,
And stamp thy brow with everlasting peace.

When thou hast lost the beauty that I gave,
And life's gay scenes no more will give thee place,
Thou may'st retire within the secret grave,
Where none shall look upon thine altered face.

But I am summoned to the eternal throne,
To meet the presence of the King most high;
I go to stand unshrouded and alone,
Full in the light of God's all-searching eye.

There must the deeds which we together wrought,
Be all remembered — each a witness made;
The outward action and the secret thought
Before the silent soul must there be weighed.

Lo! I behold the seraph throng descend
To waft me up where love and mercy dwell;
Away, vain fears! the Judge will be my friend;
It is my Father calls — pale clay, farewell!

A NAME IN THE SAND.

ALONE I walked the ocean strand;
A pearly shell was in my hand:
I stooped and wrote upon the sand
My name — the year — the day.
As onward from the spot I passed,
One lingering look behind I cast:
A wave came rolling high and fast,
And washed my lines away.

And so, methought, 'twill shortly be
With every mark on earth from me:
A wave of dark oblivion's sea
Will sweep across the place
Where I have trod the sandy shore
Of time, and been to be no more,
Of me — my day — the name I bore,
To leave nor track nor trace.

And yet, with Him who counts the sands,
And holds the waters in his hands,
I know a lasting record stands,
Inscribed against my name,
Of all this mortal part has wrought;
Of all this thinking soul has thought,
And from these fleeting moments caught
For glory or for shame.

JAMES GRAHAME.

[*From The Sabbath.*]

SABBATH MORNING.

How still the morning of the hallowed day!
Mute is the voice of rural labor, hushed
The ploughboy's whistle and the milkmaid's song.
The scythe lies glittering in the dewy wreath
Of tedded grass, mingled with fading flowers,
That yester-morn bloomed waving in the breeze.
Sounds the most faint attract the ear,—the hum
Of early bee, the trickling of the dew,
The distant bleating midway up the hill.
Calmness seems throned on yon unmoving cloud.
To him who wanders o'er the upland leas,
The blackbird's note comes mellower from the dale;
And sweeter from the sky the gladsome lark
Warbles his heaven-tuned song; the lulling brook
Murmurs more gently down the deep-sunk glen;
While from yon lowly roof, whose curling smoke
O'ermounts the mist, is heard at intervals
The voice of psalms, the simple song of praise.
  With dove-like wings Peace o'er yon village broods:
The dizzying mill-wheel rests; the anvil's din
Hath ceased; all, all around is quietness.
Less fearful on this day, the limping hare
Stops, and looks back, and stops, and looks on man,
Her deadliest foe. The toil-worn horse, set free,
Unheedful of the pasture, roams at large;
And, as his stiff unwieldy bulk he rolls,
His iron-armed hoofs gleam in the morning ray.
  But chiefly man the day of rest enjoys.
Hail, Sabbath! thee I hail, the poor man's day.
On other days, the man of toil is doomed
To eat his joyless bread, lonely, the ground
Both seat and board, screened from the winter's cold
And summer's heat by neighboring hedge or tree;
But on this day, embosomed in his home,
He shares the frugal meal with those he loves;
With those he loves he shares the heartfelt joy
Of giving thanks to God,—not thanks of form,
A word and a grimace, but reverently,
With covered face and upward earnest eye.
Hail, Sabbath! thee I hail, the poor man's day:
The pale mechanic now has leave to breathe
The morning air, pure from the city's smoke;
While wandering slowly up the riverside,
He meditates on Him whose power he marks
In each green tree that proudly spreads the bough,
As in the tiny dew-bent flowers that bloom
Around the roots.

ELINOR GRAY.

ISOLATION.

We walk alone through all life's various ways,
Through light and darkness, sorrow, joy, and change;
And greeting each to each, through passing days,
Still we are strange.

We hold our dear ones with a firm, strong grasp;
We hear their voices, look into their eyes;
And yet, betwixt us in that clinging clasp
A distance lies.

We cannot *know their hearts*, howe'er we may
Mingle thought, aspiration, hope and prayer;
We cannot reach them, and in vain essay
To enter there.

Still, in each heart of hearts a hidden deep
Lies, never fathomed by its dearest, best,
With closest care our purest thoughts we keep,
And tenderest.

But, blessed thought! we shall not always so
In darkness and in sadness walk alone;
There comes a glorious day when we shall know
As we are known.

THOMAS GRAY.

ELEGY IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds:

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower,
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,

The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure!
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour,—
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust,
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honor's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre:

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,

Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool, sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies;
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of the unhonored dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn,
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn;

There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noon-tide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

One morn I missed him on the 'customed hill,
Along the heath, and near his favorite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne,—
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.

THE EPITAPH.

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth
A youth, to fortune and to fame unknown;
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to misery all he had, a tear,
He gained from Heaven, 't was all he wished, a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

ODE ON THE SPRING.

Lo! where the rosy-bosomed hours
Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers
And wake the purple year!
The Attic warbler pours her throat
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of spring:
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool zephyrs through the clear blue sky
Their gathered fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader, browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er canopies the glade,
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardor of the crowd,
How low, how little are the proud,
How indigent the great;

Still is the toiling hand of Care;
The panting herds repose:
Yet hark, how thro' the peopled air
The busy murmur glows:
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honeyed spring
And float amid the liquid noon:
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gaily-gilded trim
Quick-glancing to the sun.

To Contemplation's sober eye
Such is the race of man:
And they that creep, and they that fly
Shall end where they began.
Alike the busy and the gay
But flutter thro' life's little day,
In fortune's varying colors drest:
Brushed by the hand of rough mischance
Or chilled by age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear in accents low
The sportive kind reply:
Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display:
On hasty wings thy youth is flown;
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone.—
We frolic while 'tis May.

THE PLEASURE ARISING FROM VICISSITUDE.

. . . . . .

Smiles on past Misfortune's brow
Soft Reflection's hand can trace,
And o'er the cheek of Sorrow throw
A melancholy grace;
While hope prolongs our happier hour,
Or deepest shades, that dimly lower
And blacken round our weary way,
Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still, where rosy Pleasure leads,
See a kindred Grief pursue;
Behind the steps that Misery treads
Approaching Comfort view:
The hues of bliss more brightly glow
Chastised by sabler tints of woe,
And blended form, with artful strife,
The strength and harmony of life.

See the wretch that long has tost
On the thorny bed of pain,
At length repair his vigor lost
And breathe and walk again:
The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening Paradise.

ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON.

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,
That crown the wat'ry glade,
Where grateful Science still adores
Her Henry's holy shade!
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights the expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver winding way.

Ah, happy hills! ah, pleasing shade!
Ah, fields beloved in vain!
Where once my careless childhood strayed,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales, that from ye blow,
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to sooth,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, Father Thames (for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race,
Disporting on thy margent green,
The paths of pleasure trace),
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthral?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

While some, on earnest business bent,
Their murm'ring labors ply
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint
To sweeten liberty:
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
And unknown regions dare descry,
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possest;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast:
Theirs buxom health, of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer, of vigor born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light
That fly the approach of morn.

Alas! regardless of their doom
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see how all around them wait
The ministers of human fate
And black misfortune's baleful train!
Ah, show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murderous band!
Ah, tell them they are men!

These shall the fury passions tear,
The vultures of the mind,
Disdainful anger, pallid fear,
And shame that skulks behind;
Or pining love shall waste their youth,
Or jealousy with rankling tooth
That inly gnaws the secret heart,
And envy wan, and faded care,
Grim-visaged comfortless despair,
And sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high
To bitter scorn a sacrifice
And grinning infamy.
The stings of falsehood those shall try,
And hard unkindness' altered eye,
That mocks the tear it forced to flow;
And keen remorse with blood defiled,
And moody madness laughing wild
Amid severest woe.

Lo, in the Vale of Years beneath
A grisly troop are seen,
The painful family of Death,
More hideous than their queen:

This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every laboring sinew strains,
Those in the deeper vitals rage:
Lo, poverty, to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming age.

To each his sufferings: all are men,
Condemned alike to groan;
The tender for another's pain,
The unfeeling for his own.
Yet, ah! why should they know their fate,
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their paradise!
No more,— where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise.

ZADEL BARNES GUSTAFSON.

LITTLE MARTIN CRAGHAN.

ONE reads to me Macaulay's "Lays"
With fervid voice, intoning well
The poet's fire, the vocal grace;
They hold me like a spell.

'Twere marvel if in human veins
Could beat a pulse so cold
It would not quicken to the strains,
The flying, fiery strains, that tell
How Romans "kept the bridge so well
In the brave days of old."

The while I listened, till my blood,
Plunged in the poet's martial mood,
Rushed in my veins like wine,
I prayed,— to One who hears, I wis:
"Give me one breath of power like this
To sing of Pittston mine!"

A child looks up the ragged shaft,
A boy whose meagre frame
Shrinks as he hears the roaring draught
That feeds the eager flame.

He has a single chance; the stakes
Of life show death at bay
One moment; then his comrade takes
The hope he casts away.

For while his trembling hand is raised,
And while his sweet eyes shine,
There swells above the love of life
The rush of love divine,—
The thought of those unwarned, to whom
Death steals along the mine.

O little Martin Craghan!
I reck not if you swore,
Like Porsena of Clusium,
By gods of mythic lore;
But well I ween as great a heart
Beat your small bosom sore.

And that your bare brown feet scarce felt
The way they bounded o'er.
I know you were a hero then,
Whate'er you were before;
And in God's sight your flying feet
Made white the cavern floor.

The while he speeds that darksome way,
Hope paints upon his fears
Soft visions of the light of day;
Faint songs of birds he hears;
In summer breeze his tangled curls
Are blown about his ears.

He sees the men; he warns; and now,
His duty bravely done,
Sweet hope may paint the fairest scene
That spreads beneath the sun.

Back to the burning shaft he flies;
There bounding pulses fail;
The light forsakes his lifted eyes;
The glowing cheek is pale.

With wheeling, whirling, hungry flame,
The seething shaft is rife:
Where solid chains drip liquid fire,
What chance for human life?

To die with those he hoped to save,
Back, back, through heat and gloom,
To find a wall,— and Death and he
Shut in the larger tomb!

He pleaded to be taken in
As closer rolled the smoke;
In deathful vapors they could hear
His piteous accents choke.
And they, with shaking voice, refused;
And then the young heart broke.

Oh love of life! God made it strong,
And knows how close it pressed;
And death to those who love life least
Is scarce a welcome guest.

One thought of the poor wife, whose head
Last night lay on his breast:
A quiver runs through lips that morn
By children's lips caressed.

These things the sweet strong thoughts of home,—
Though but a wretched place,
To which the sad-eyed miners come
With Labor's laggard pace,—
Remembered in the cavern gloom,
Illume the haggard face,—

Illumed their faces, steeled each heart.
O God! what mysteries
Of brave and base make sum and part
Of human histories!
What will not thy poor creatures do
To buy an hour of breath!
Well for us all some souls are true
Above the fear of death!

He wept a little,—for they heard
The sound of sobs, the sighs
That breathed of martyrdom complete
Unseen of mortal eyes,—
And then, no longer swift, his feet
Passed down the galleries.

He crept and crouched beside his mule,
Led by its dying moan;
He touched it feebly with a hand
That shook like palsy's own.
God grant the touch had power to make
The child feel less alone!

Who knoweth every heart, He knows
What moved the boyish mind;
What longings grew to passion-throes
For dear ones left behind;
How hardly youth and youth's desires
Their hold of life resigned.

Perhaps the little fellow felt
As brave Horatius thought,
When for those dearer Roman lives
He held his own as nought.

For how could boy die better
Than facing fearful fires
To save poor women's husbands
And helpless children's sires?

Death leaned upon him heavily;
But Love, more mighty still,—
She lent him slender lease of life
To work her tender will.

He felt with sightless, sentient hand
Along the wall and ground,
And there the rude and simple page
For his sweet purpose found.

O'erwritten with the names he loved,
Clasped to his little side,
Dim eyes the wooden record read
Hours after he had died.

Thus from all knowledge of his kind,
In darkness lone and vast,
From life to death, from death to life
The little hero passed.

And, while they listened for the feet
That would return no more,
Far off they fell in music sweet
Upon another shore.

SAMUEL MILLER HAGEMAN.

ONLY.

ONLY a little child,
Crushed to death to-day in the mart;
But the whole unhorizoned kingdom of heaven
Was in that little heart.

Only a grain of sand,
Swirled up where the sea lies spent;
But it holds wherever it be in space
The poise of a continent.

Only a minute gone,
That to think of now is vain;
Ah! that was the minute without whose link
Had dropped Eternity's chain.

THE TWO GREAT CITIES.

SIDE by side rise the two great cities,
Afar on the traveller's sight;
One, black with the dust of labor,
One, solemnly still and white.
Apart, and yet together,
They are reached in a dying breath,
But a river flows between them,
And the river's name is — Death

Apart, and yet together,
Together, and yet apart,
As the child may die at midnight
On the mother's living heart.
So close come the two great cities,
With only the river between;
And the grass in the one is trampled,
But the grass in the other is green.

The hills with uncovered foreheads,
Like the disciples meet,
While ever the flowing water
Is washing their hallowed feet.
And out on the glassy ocean,
The sails in the golden gloom
Seem to me but moving shadows
Of the white emmarbled tomb.

Anon, from the hut and the palace
Anon, from early till late,
They come, rich and poor together,
Asking alms at thy beautiful gate.
And never had life a guerdon
So welcome to all to give,
In the land where the living are dying,
As the land where the dead may live.

O silent city of refuge
On the way to the city o'erhead!
The gleam of thy marble milestones
Tells the distance we are from the dead.
Full of feet, but a city untrodden,
Full of hands, but a city unbuilt,
Full of strangers who know not even
That their life-cup lies there spilt.

They know not the tomb from the palace,
They dream not they ever have died:
God be thanked they never will know it
Till they live on the other side!
From the doors that death shut coldly
On the face of their last lone woe:
They came to thy glades for shelter
Who had nowhere else to go.

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK.

MARCO BOZZARIS.

At midnight in his guarded tent,
The Turk was dreaming of the hour
When Greece, her knee in suppliance bent,
Should tremble at his power:
In dreams, through camp and court he bore
The trophies of a conqueror;
In dreams his song of triumph heard;
Then wore his monarch's signet ring:
Then pressed that monarch's throne — a king;
As wild his thoughts, and gay of wing,
As Eden's garden bird.

At midnight, in the forest shades,
Bozzaris ranged his Suliote band,
True as the steel of their tried blades,
Heroes in heart and hand.
There had the Persian's thousands stood,
There had the glad earth drunk their blood
On old Platæa's day;
And now there breathed that haunted air
The sons of sires who conquered there,
With arm to strike, and soul to dare,
As quick, as far as they.

An hour passed on — the Turk awoke;
That bright dream was his last;
He woke to hear his sentries shriek,
"To arms! they come! the Greek! the Greek!"
He woke — to die midst flame and smoke,
And shout, and groan, and sabre-stroke,
And death-shots falling thick and fast
As lightnings from the mountain-cloud;
And heard, with voice as trumpet loud,
Bozzaris cheer his band.
"Strike — till the last armed foe expires;
Strike — for your altars and your fires;
Strike — for the green graves of your sires:
God, and your native land!"

They fought,— like brave men, long and well;
They piled that ground with Moslem slain;
They conquered — but Bozzaris fell,
Bleeding at every vein.
His few surviving comrades saw
His smile when rang their proud hurrah,
And the red field was won:
Then saw in death his eyelids close
Calmly, as to a night's repose,
Like flowers at set of sun.

Come to the bridal chamber, Death!
Come to the mother's, when she feels,
For the first time, her first-born's breath;
Come when the blessed seals
That close the pestilence are broke,
And crowded cities wail its stroke;
Come in Consumption's ghastly form,
The earthquake shock, the ocean storm;
Come when the heart beats high and warm,
With banquet-song, and dance, and wine;
And thou art terrible — the tear,
The groan, the knell, the pall, the bier,
And all we know, or dream, or fear,
Of agony, are thine.

But to the hero, when his sword
Has won the battle for the free,

Thy voice sounds like a prophet's word;
And in its hollow tones are heard
The thanks of millions yet to be.
Come, when his task of fame is wrought —
Come with her laurel-leaf, blood-bought —
Come in her crowning hour — and then
Thy sunken eye's unearthly light
To him is welcome as the sight
Of sky and stars to prisoned men;
Thy grasp is welcome as the hand
Of brother in a foreign land;
Thy summons welcome as the cry
That told the Indian isles were nigh
To the world-seeking Genoese,
When the land-wind, from woods of palm,
And orange-groves, and fields of balm,
Blew o'er the Haytien seas.

Bozzaris! with the storied brave,
Greece nurtured in her glory's time,
Rest thee — there is no prouder grave,
Even in her own proud clime.
She wore no funeral weeds for thee,
Nor bade the dark hearse wave its plume,
Like torn branch from death's leafless tree,
In sorrow's pomp and pageantry,
The heartless luxury of the tomb:
But she remembers thee as one
Long loved and for a season gone.
For thee her poets' lyre is wreathed,
Her marble wrought, her music breathed:
For thee she rings the birthday bells;
Of thee her babes' first lisping tells:
For thine her evening prayer is said
At palace couch, and cottage bed;
Her soldier, closing with the foe,
Gives for thy sake a deadlier blow;
His plighted maiden, when she fears
For him, the joy of her young years,
Thinks of thy fate, and checks her tears.
And she, the mother of thy boys,
Though in her eye and faded cheek
Is read the grief she will not speak,
The memory of her buried joys,
And even she who gave thee birth,
Will, by their pilgrim-circled hearth,
Talk of thy doom without a sigh:
For thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's,
One of the few, the immortal names
That were not born to die.

BURNS.

Wild rose of Alloway! my thanks;
Thou mind'st me of that autumn noon
When first we met upon "the banks
And braes o' bonny Doon."

Like thine, beneath the thorn-tree's bough,
My sunny hour was glad and brief
We've crossed the winter sea, and thou
Art withered — flower and leaf.

And will not thy death-doom be mine —
The doom of all things wrought of clay?
And withered my life's leaf like thine,
Wild rose of Alloway?

Not so his memory for whose sake
My bosom bore thee far and long,
His, who a humbler flower could make
Immortal as his song.

The memory of Burns — a name
That calls, when brimmed her festal cup,
A nation's glory and her shame,
In silent sadness up.

A nation's glory — be the rest
Forgot — she's canonized his mind,
And it is joy to speak the best
We may of humankind.

I've stood beside the cottage-bed
Where the bard-peasant first drew breath;

A straw-thatched roof above his head,
A straw-wrought couch beneath.

And I have stood beside the pile,
His monument—that tells to heaven
The homage of earth's proudest isle
To that bard-peasant given.

Bid thy thoughts hover o'er that spot,
Boy-minstrel, in thy dreaming hour;
And know, however low his lot,
A poet's pride and power;

The pride that lifted Burns from earth,
The power that gave a child of song
Ascendency o'er rank and birth,
The rich, the brave, the strong;

And if despondency weigh down
Thy spirit's fluttering pinions then,
Despair — thy name is written on
The roll of common men.

There have been loftier themes than his,
And longer scrolls, and louder lyres,
And lays lit up with Poesy's
Purer and holier fires;

Yet read the names that know not death;
Few nobler ones than Burns are there;
And few have won a greener wreath
Than that which binds his hair.

His is that language of the heart
In which the answering heart would speak,
Thought, word, that bids the warm tear start,
Or the smile light the cheek;

And his that music to whose tone
The common pulse of man keeps time,
In cot or castle's mirth or moan,
In cold or sunny clime.

And who hath heard his song, not knelt
Before its spell with willing knee,
And listened, and believed, and felt
The poet's mastery

O'er the mind's sea, in calm and storm,
O'er the heart's sunshine and its showers,
O'er Passion's moments, bright and warm,
O'er Reason's dark, cold hours;

On fields where brave men "die or do,"
In halls where rings the banquet's mirth,
Where mourners weep, where lovers woo,
From throne to cottage hearth ?

What sweet tears dim the eye unshed,
What wild vows falter on the tongue,
When "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled,"
Or "Auld Lang Syne," is sung!

Pure hopes, that lift the soul above,
Come with his Cotter's hymn of praise,
And dreams of youth, and truth, and love
With "Logan's" banks and braes.

And when he breathes his master-lay
Of Alloway's witch-haunted wall,
All passions in our frames of clay
Come thronging at his call.

Imagination's world of air,
And our own world, its gloom and glee,
Wit, pathos, poetry, are there,
And death's sublimity.

And Burns, though brief the race he ran,
Though rough and dark the path he trod —
Lived, died, in form and soul a man,
The image of his God.

Through care, and pain, and want, and woe,
With wounds that only death could heal,
Tortures the poor alone can know,
The proud alone can feel;

He kept his honesty and truth,
His independent tongue and pen,
And moved, in manhood as in youth,
Pride of his fellow-men.

Strong sense, deep feeling, passions strong,
A hate of tyrant and of knave,
A love of right, a scorn of wrong,
Of coward and of slave;

A kind, true heart, a spirit high,
That could not fear and would not bow,
Were written in his manly eye
And on his manly brow.

Praise to the bard! his words are driven,
Like flower-seeds by the far winds sown,
Where'er, beneath the sky of heaven,
The birds of fame have flown.

Praise to the man! a nation stood
Beside his coffin with wet eyes,
Her brave, her beautiful, her good,
As when a loved one dies.

And still, as on his funeral-day,
Men stand his cold earth-couch around,
With the mute homage that we pay
To consecrated ground.

And consecrated ground it is,
The last, the hallowed home of one
Who lives upon all memories,
Though with the buried gone.

Such graves as his are pilgrim-shrines,
Shrines to no code or creed confined —
The Delphian vales, the Palestines,
The Meccas of the mind.

Sages, with Wisdom's garland wreathed,
Crowned kings, and mitred priests of power,
And warriors with their bright swords sheathed,
The mightiest of the hour.

And lowlier names, whose humble home
Is lit by fortune's dimmer star,
Are there — o'er wave and mountain come,
From countries near and far;

Pilgrims, whose wandering feet have pressed
The Switzer's snow, the Arab's sand,
Or trod the piled leaves of the west,
My own green forest land.

All ask the cottage of his birth,
Gaze on the scenes he loved and sung,
And gather feelings not of earth
His field and streams among.

They linger by the Doon's low trees,
And pastoral Nith, and wooded Ayr,
And round thy sepulchres, Dumfries!
The Poet's tomb is there.

But what to them the sculptor's art,
His funeral columns, wreaths, and urns?
Wear they not graven on the heart
The name of Robert Burns?

ON THE DEATH OF JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE.

Green be the turf above thee,
Friend of my better days!
None knew thee but to love thee,
Nor named thee but to praise.

Tears fell, when thou wert dying,
From eyes unused to weep,
And long where thou art lying,
Will tears the cold turf steep.

When hearts, whose truth was proven,
Like thine, are laid in earth,
There should a wreath be woven
To tell the world their worth;

And I, who woke each morrow
To clasp thy hand in mine,
Who shared thy joy and sorrow,
Whose weal and wo were thine;

It should be mine to braid it
Around thy faded brow,
But I've in vain essayed it,
And feel I cannot now.

While memory bids me weep thee,
Nor thoughts nor words are free,
The grief is fixed too deeply
That mourns a man like thee.

FRANCIS BRET HARTE.

TO A SEA-BIRD.

SAUNTERING hither on listless wings,
Careless vagabond of the sea,
Little thou heedest the surf that sings,
The bar that thunders, the shale that rings,—
Give me to keep thy company.

Little thou hast, old friend, that's new;
Storms and wrecks are old things to thee;
Sick am I of these changes too;
Little to care for, little to rue,—
I on the shore, and thou on the sea.

All of thy wanderings, far and near,
Bring thee at last to shore and me;
All of my journeyings end them here,
This our tether must be our cheer,—
I on the shore, and thou on the sea.

Lazily rocking on ocean's breast,
Something in common, old friend, have we;
Thou on the shingle seekest thy nest,
I to the waters look for rest,—
I on the shore, and thou on the sea.

LONE MOUNTAIN CEMETERY.

THIS is that hill of awe
That Persian Sindbad saw,—
The mount magnetic;
And on its seaward face,
Scattered along its base,
The wrecks prophetic.

Here come the argosies
Blown by each idle breeze,
To and fro shifting;
Yet to the hill of Fate
All drawing, soon or late,—
Day by day drifting,—

Drifting forever here
Barks that for many a year
Braved wind and weather;
Shallops but yesterday
Launched on yon shining bay,—
Drawn all together.

This is the end of all:
Sun thyself by the wall,
O poorer Hindbad!
Envy not Sindbad's fame:
Here come alike the same,
Hindbad and Sindbad.

JOHN HAY.

THE PRAIRIE.

THE skies are blue above my head,
The prairie green below,
And flickering o'er the tufted grass
The shifting shadows go,
Vague-sailing, where the feathery clouds
Fleck white the tranquil skies,
Black javelins darting where aloft
The whirling pheasant flies.

A glimmering plain in drowsy trance
The dim horizon bounds,
Where all the air is resonant
With sleepy summer sounds,
The life that sings among the flowers,
The lisping of the breeze,
The hot cicala's sultry cry,
The murmurous dreamy bees.

The butterfly, — a flying flower —
Wheels swift in flashing rings,
And flutters round his quiet kin,
With brave flame-mottled wings.
The wild pinks burst in crimson fire,
The phlox' bright clusters shine,
And prairie-cups are swinging free
To spill their airy wine.

And lavishly beneath the sun,
In liberal splendor rolled,
The fennel fills the dipping plain
With floods of flowery gold:
And widely weaves the iron-weed
A woof of purple dyes
Where Autumn's royal feet may tread
When bankrupt Summer flies.

In verdurous tumult far away
The prairie-billows gleam,
Upon their crests in blessing rests
The noontide's gracious beam.
Low quivering vapors steaming dim,
The level splendors break
Where languid lilies deck the rim
Of some land-circled lake.

Far in the East like low-hung clouds
The waving woodlands lie;
Far in the West the glowing plain
Melts warmly in the sky.
No accent wounds the reverent air,
No footprint dints the sod, —
Low in the light the prairie lies
Rapt in a dream of God.

IN A GRAVEYARD.

IN the dewy depths of the graveyard
I lie in the tangled grass,
And watch in the sea of azure,
The white cloud-islands pass.

The birds in the rustling branches
Sing gaily overhead;
Gray stones like sentinel spectres
Are guarding the silent dead.

The early flowers sleep shaded
In the cool green noonday glooms;
The broken light falls shuddering
On the cold white face of the tombs.

Without, the world is smiling
In the infinite love of God,
But the sunlight fails and falters
When it falls on the churchyard sod.

On me the joyous rapture
Of a heart's first love is shed,
But it falls on my heart as coldly
As sunlight on the dead.

REMORSE.

SAD is the thought of sunniest days
Of love and rapture perished,
And shine through memory's tearful haze
The eyes once fondliest cherished.
Reproachful is the ghost of toys
That charmed while life was wasted.
But saddest is the thought of joys
That never yet were tasted.

Sad is the vague and tender dream
Of dead love's lingering kisses,
To crushed hearts haloed by the gleam
Of unreturning blisses;
Deep mourns the soul in anguished pride
For the pitiless death that won them, —
But the saddest wail is for lips that died
With the virgin dew upon them.

ON THE BLUFF.

O GRANDLY flowing River!
O silver-gliding River!
Thy springing willows shiver
In the sunset as of old;
They shiver in the silence
Of the willow-whitened islands,
While the sun-bars and the sand-bars
Fill air and wave with gold.

O gay, oblivious River!
O sunset-kindled River!
Do you remember ever
The eyes and skies so blue
On a summer day that shone here,
When we were all alone here,
And the blue eyes were too wise
To speak the love they knew?

O stern impassive River!
O still unanswering River!
The shivering willows quiver
As the night-winds moan and rave.
From the past a voice is calling,
From heaven a star is falling,
And dew swells in the bluebells
Above her hillside grave.

A WOMAN'S LOVE.

A SENTINEL angel sitting high in glory
Heard this shrill wail ring out from Purgatory:
"Have mercy, mighty angel, hear my story!

"I loved, — and, blind with passionate love, I fell.
Love brought me down to death, and death to Hell.
For God is just, and death for sin is well.

"I do not rage against his high decree,
Nor for myself do ask that grace shall be:
But for my love on earth who mourns for me.

"Great Spirit! Let me see my love again
And comfort him one hour, and I were fain
To pay a thousand years of fire and pain."

Then said the pitying angel, "Nay, repent
That wild vow! Look, the dial finger's bent
Down to the last hour of thy punishment!"

But still she wailed, "I pray thee, let me go!
I cannot rise to peace and leave him so.
O, let me soothe him in his bitter woe!"

The brazen gates ground sullenly ajar,
And upward, joyous, like a rising star,
She rose and vanished in the ether far.

But soon adown the dying sunset sailing,
And like a wounded bird her pinions trailing,
She fluttered back, with broken-hearted wailing.

She sobbed, "I found him by the summer sea
Reclined, his head upon a maiden's knee, —
She curled his hair and kissed him. Woe is me!"

She wept. "Now let my punishment begin!
I have been fond and foolish. Let me in
To expiate my sorrow and my sin."

The angel answered, "Nay, sad soul, go higher!
To be deceived in your true heart's desire
Was bitterer than a thousand years of fire!"

LAGRIMAS.

God send me tears!
Loose the fierce band that binds my tired brain,
Give me the melting heart of other years,
And let me weep again!

Before me pass
The shapes of things inexorably true.
Gone is the sparkle of transforming dew
From every blade of grass.

In life's high noon
Aimless I stand, my promised task undone,
And raise my hot eyes to the angry sun
That will go down too soon.

Turned into gall
Are the sweet joys of childhood's sunny reign;
And memory is a torture, love a chain
That binds my life in thrall.

And childhood's pain
Could to me now the purest rapture yield;
I pray for tears as in his parching field
The husbandman for rain.

We pray in vain!
The sullen sky flings down its blaze of brass;
The joys of life all scorched and withering pass;
I shall not weep again.

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE.

A SUMMER MOOD.

Ah me! for evermore, for evermore
These human hearts of ours must yearn and sigh,
While down the dells and up the murmurous shore
Nature renews her immortality.

The heavens of June stretch calm and bland above,
June roses blush with tints of orient skies,
But we, by graves of joy, desire, and love,
Mourn in a world which breathes of Paradise!

The sunshine mocks the tears it may not dry,
The breezes — tricksy couriers of the air, —
Child-roisterers winged, and lightly fluttering by —
Blow their gay trumpets in the face of care;

And bolder winds, the deep sky's passionate speech,
Woven into rhythmic raptures of desire,
Or fugues of mystic victory, sadly reach
Our humbled souls, to rack, not raise them higher!

The field-birds seem to twit us as they pass
With their small blisses, piped so clear and loud;
The cricket triumphs o'er us in the grass,
And the lark, glancing beamlike up the cloud,

Sings us to scorn with his keen rhapsodies:
Small things and great unconscious tauntings bring
To edge our cares, while we, the proud and wise,
Envy the insect's joy, the birdling's wing!

And thus for evermore, till time shall cease,
Man's soul and Nature's — each a separate sphere —
Revolves, the one in discord, one in peace,
And who shall make the solemn mystery clear?

BY THE AUTUMN SEA.

Fair as the dawn of the fairest day,
Sad as the evening's tender gray,
By the latest lustre of sunset kissed,
That wavers and wanes through an amber mist,—
There cometh a dream of the past to me,
On the desert sands, by the autumn sea.

All heaven is wrapped in a mystic veil,
And the face of the ocean is dim and pale,
And there rises a wind from the chill northwest,
That seemeth the wail of a soul's unrest,
As the twilight falls, and the vapors flee
Far over the wastes of the autumn sea.

A single ship through the gloaming glides
Upborne on the swell of the seaward tides;
And above the gleam of her topmost spar
Are the virgin eyes of the vesper star
That shine with an angel's ruth on me, —
A hopeless waif, by the autumn sea.

The wings of the ghostly beach-birds gleam
Through the shimmering surf, and the curlew's scream
Falls faintly shrill from the darkening height;
The first weird sigh on the lips of Night
Breathes low through the sedge and the blasted tree,
With a murmur of doom, by the autumn sea.

Oh, sky-enshadowed and yearning main,
Your gloom but deepens this *human* pain;
Those waves seem big with a nameless care,
That sky is a type of the heart's despair,
As I linger and muse by the sombre lea,
And the night-shades close on the autumn sea.

THE WOODLAND.

Yon woodland, like a human mind
Has many a phase of dark and light;
Now dim with shadows wandering blind,
Now radiant with fair shapes of light;

They softly come, they softly go,
Capricious as the vagrant wind, —
Nature's vague thoughts in gloom or glow,
That leave no airiest trace behind.

No trace, no trace; yet wherefore thus
Do shade and beam our spirits stir?
Ah! Nature may be cold to us,
But we are strangely moved by her!

The wild bird's strain, the breezy spray,
Each hour with sure earth-changes rife,

Hint more than all the sages say,
Or poets sing, of death or life!

For, truth half drawn from Nature's breast,
Through subtlest types of form and tone,
Outweigh what man at most hath guessed,
While heeding his own heart alone.

And midway betwixt heaven and us
Stands Nature, in her fadeless grace,
Still pointing to our Father's house,
His glory on her mystic face!

WINDLESS RAIN.

The rain, the desolate rain!
Ceaseless, and solemn, and chill!
How it drips on the misty pane,
How it drenches the darkened sill!
O scene of sorrow and dearth!
I would that the wind awaking
To a fierce and gusty birth
Might vary this dull refrain
Of the rain, the desolate rain:
For the heart of heaven seems breaking
In tears o'er the fallen earth,
And again, again, again,
We list to the sombre strain,
The faint, cold, monotone —
Whose soul is a mystic moan —
Of the rain, the mournful rain,
The soft, despairing rain!

The rain, the murmurous rain!
Weary, passionless, slow,
'T is the rhythm of settled sorrow,
'T is the sobbing of cureless woe!
And all the tragic life,
The pathos of Long-Ago,
Comes back on the sad refrain
Of the rain, the dreary rain,
Till the graves in my heart unclose
And the dead who are buried there
From a solemn and weird repose
Awake, — but with eyeballs drear,
And voices that melt in pain
On the tide of the plaintive rain,
The yearning, hopeless rain,
The long, low, whispering rain?

THE STING OF DEATH.

I fear thee not, O Death! nay, oft I pine
To clasp thy passionless bosom to mine own, —
And on thy heart sob out my latest moan,
Ere lapped and lost in thy strange sleep divine;
But much I fear lest that chill breath of thine
Should freeze all tender memories into stone, —
Lest ruthless and malign Oblivion
Quench the last spark that lingers on love's shrine: —
O God! to moulder through dark, dateless years, —
The while all loving ministries shall cease,
And Time assuage the fondest mourner's tears! —
Here lies the sting! — this, *this* it is to die! —
And yet great Nature rounds all strife with peace,
And life or death, — each rests in mystery!

JASMINE.

Of all the woodland flowers of earlier spring,
These golden jasmines, each an air-hung bower,
Meet for the Queen of Fairies' tiring hour,
Seem loveliest and most fair in blossoming; —
How yonder mock-bird thrills his fervid wing
And long, lithe throat, where twinkling flower on flower
Rains the globed dewdrops down, a diamond shower,
O'er his brown head, poised as in act to sing; —
Lo! the swift sunshine floods the flowery urns.
Girding their delicate gold with matchless light,

Till the blent life of bough, leaf, blossom, burns;
Then, then outbursts the mock-bird clear and loud,
Half-drunk with perfume, veiled by radiance bright,—
A star of music in a fiery cloud!

REGINALD HEBER.

IF THOU WERT BY MY SIDE.

If thou wert by my side, my love,
How fast would evening fail
In green Bengala's palmy grove,
Listening the nightingale!

If thou, my love, wert by my side,
My babies at my knee,
How gaily would our pinnace glide
O'er Gunga's mimic sea!

I miss thee at the dawning gray,
When on our deck reclined,
In careless ease my limbs I lay,
And woo the cooler wind.

I miss thee when by Gunga's stream
My twilight steps I guide,
But most beneath the lamp's pale beam
I miss thee from my side.

I spread my books, my pencil try,
The lingering noon to cheer,
But miss thy kind approving eye,
Thy meek attentive ear.

But when of morn or eve the star
Beholds me on my knee,
I feel, though thou art distant far,
Thy prayers ascend for me.

Then on! then on! where duty leads,
My course be onward still;
O'er broad Hindostan's sultry meads,
O'er bleak Almorah's hill.

That course, nor Delhi's kingly gates,
Nor wild Malwah detain;
For sweet the bliss us both awaits
By yonder western main.

Thy towers, Bombay, gleam bright, they say,
Across the dark-blue sea;
But ne'er were hearts so light and gay
As then shall meet in thee!

JAMES HEDDERWICK.

MIDDLE LIFE.

Fair time of calm resolve — of sober thought!
Quiet half-way hostelry on life's long road,
In which to rest and readjust our load!
High table-land, to which we have been brought
By stumbling steps of ill-directed toil!
Season when not to achieve is to despair!
Last field for us of a full fruitful soil!
Only spring-tide our freighted aims to bear
Onward to all our yearning dreams have sought!

How art thou changed! Once to our youthful eyes
Thin silvering locks and thought's imprinted lines
Of sloping age gave weird and wintry signs:

But now these trophies ours, we recognize
Only a voice faint-rippling to its shore,
And a weak tottering step as marks of old.
None are so far but some are on before;
Thus still at distance is the goal beheld,
And to improve the way is truly wise.

Farewell, ye blossomed hedges! and the deep
Thick green of summer on the matted bough!
The languid autumn mellows round us now:
Yet fancy may its vernal beauties keep,
Like holly leaves for a December wreath.
To take this gift of life with trusting hands,
And star with heavenly hopes the night of death,
Is all that poor humanity demands
To lull its meaner fears to easy sleep.

FREDERIC HENRY HEDGE.

QUESTIONINGS.

Hath this world without me wrought
Other substance than my thought?
Lives it by my sense alone,
Or by essence of its own?
Will its life, with mine begun,
Cease to be when that is done?
Or another consciousness
With the self-same forms impress?

Doth yon fire-ball, poised in air,
Hang by my permission there?
Are the clouds that wander by
But the offspring of mine eye,
Born with every glance I cast,
Perishing when that is past?
And those thousand, thousand eyes,
Scattered through the twinkling skies,
Do they draw their life from mine,
Or of their own beauty shine?

Now I close my eyes, my ears,
And creation disappears;
Yet if I but speak the word,
All creation is restored.
Or — more wonderful — within,
New creations do begin;
Hues more bright and forms more rare
Than reality doth wear,
Flash across my inward sense
Born of the mind's omnipotence.

Soul! that all informest, say!
Shall these glories pass away?
Will those planets cease to blaze
When these eyes no longer gaze?
And the life of things be o'er
When these pulses beat no more?

Thought! that in me works and lives, —
Life to all things living gives, —
Art thou not thyself, perchance,
But the universe in trance?
A reflection inly flung
By that world thou fanciedst sprung
From thyself, — thyself a dream, —
Of the world's thinking, thou the theme?

Be it thus, or be thy birth
From a source above the earth, —
Be thou matter, be thou mind,
In thee alone myself I find,
And through thee, alone, for me,
Hath this world reality.
Therefore, in thee will I live,
To thee all myself will give,
Losing still that I may find
This bounded self in boundless mind

FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS.

BREATHINGS OF SPRING.

WHAT wak'st thou, Spring? Sweet voices in the woods,
And reed-like echoes, that have long been mute;
Thou bringest back, to fill the solitudes,
The lark's clear pipe, the cuckoo's viewless flute,
Whose tone seems breathing mournfulness or glee,
Even as our hearts may be.

And the leaves greet thee, Spring!—the joyous leaves,
Whose tremblings gladden many a copse and glade,
Where each young spray a rosy flush receives,
When thy south wind hath pierced the whispery shade,
And happy murmurs, running through the grass,
Tell that thy footsteps pass.

And the bright waters,—they, too, hear thy call,
Spring, the awakener! thou hast burst their sleep!
Amidst the hollows of the rocks their fall
Makes melody, and in the forests deep,
Where sudden sparkles and blue gleams betray
Their windings to the day.

And flowers,—the fairy-peopled world of flowers!
Thou from the dust hast set that glory free,
Coloring the cowslip with the sunny hours,
And pencilling the wood-anemone:
Silent they seem; yet each to thoughtful eye
Glows with mute poesy.

But what awak'st thou in the heart, O Spring!—
The human heart, with all its dreams and sighs?
Thou that givest back so many a buried thing,
Restorer of forgotten harmonies!
Fresh songs and scents break forth where'er thou art:
What wak'st thou in the heart?

Too much, oh, there, too much!—we know not well
Wherefore it should be thus; yet, roused by thee,
What fond, strange yearnings, from the soul's deep cell,
Gush for the faces we no more may see!
How are we haunted, in thy wind's low tone,
By voices that are gone!

Looks of familiar love, that never more,
Never on earth, our aching eyes shall meet,
Past words of welcome to our household door,
And vanished smiles, and sounds of parted feet,—
Spring, midst the murmurs of thy flowering trees,
Why, why revivest thou these?

Vain longings for the dead!—why come they back
With thy young birds, and leaves, and living blooms?
Oh, is it not that from thine earthly track
Hope to thy world may look beyond the tombs?
Yes, gentle Spring; no sorrow dims thine air,
Breathed by our loved ones there.

THE INVOCATION.

Answer me, burning stars of night!
Where is the spirit gone,
That past the reach of human sight,
Even as a breeze, hath flown?
And the stars answered me,—"We roll
In light and power on high,
But, of the never-dying soul,
Ask things that cannot die!"

Oh! many-toned and chainless wind!
Thou art a wanderer free;
Tell me if thou its place canst find,
Far over mount and sea?
And the wind murmured in reply,
"The blue deep I have crossed,
And met its barks and billows high,
But not what thou hast lost!"

Ye clouds that gorgeously repose
Around the setting sun,
Answer! have ye a home for those
Whose earthly race is run?
The bright clouds answered,—"We depart,
We vanish from the sky;
Ask what is deathless in thy heart
For that which cannot die!"

Speak, then, thou voice of God within!
Thou of the deep low tone!
Answer me through life's restless din,
Where is the spirit flown?
And the voice answered, "Be thou still!
Enough to know is given;
Clouds, winds, and stars their task fulfil;
Thine is to trust in Heaven!"

THE HOUR OF DEATH.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set,—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, oh! Death.

Day is for mortal care,
Eve for glad meetings round the joyous hearth,
Night for the dreams of sleep, the voice of prayer,—
But all for thee, thou mightiest of the earth.

The banquet hath its hour,
Its feverish hour of mirth, and song, and wine;
There comes a day for grief's o'erwhelming power,
A time for softer tears,—but all are thine.

Youth and the opening rose
May look like things too glorious for decay,
And smile at thee,—but thou art not of those
That wait the ripened bloom to seize their prey.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set,—but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, oh! Death.

We know when moons shall wane,
When summer-birds from far shall cross the sea,
When autumn's hue shall tinge the golden grain,—
But who shall teach us when to look for thee?

Is it when spring's first gale
Comes forth to whisper where the violets lie?
Is it when roses in our paths grow pale?
They have *one* season,—*all* are ours to die!

Thou art where billows foam,
Thou art where music melts upon the air;
Thou art around us in our peaceful home,
And the world calls us forth,—and thou art there.

Thou art where friend meets friend,
Beneath the shadow of the elm to rest,—
Thou art where foe meets foe, and trumpets rend
The skies, and swords beat down the princely crest.

Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north-wind's breath,
And stars to set,— but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own, oh! Death.

EVENING PRAYER AT A GIRLS' SCHOOL.

Hush! 'tis a holy hour,— the quiet room
Seems like a temple, while yon soft lamp sheds
A faint and starry radiance, through the gloom
And the sweet stillness, down on bright young heads,
With all their clustering locks, untouched by care,
And bowed, as flowers are bowed with night,— in prayer.

Gaze on,— 'tis lovely! — childhood's lip and cheek,
Mantling beneath its earnest brow of thought,
Gaze,— yet what seest thou in those fair, and meek,
And fragile things, as but for sunshine wrought?
Thou seest what grief must nurture for the sky,
What death must fashion for eternity!

Oh! joyous creatures, that will sink to rest,
Lightly, when those pure orisons are done,
As birds with slumber's honey-dew oppressed,
'Midst the dim folded leaves, at set of sun,—
Lift up your hearts! — though yet no sorrow lies
Dark in the summer-heaven of those clear eyes;

Though fresh within your breasts the untroubled springs
Of hope make melody where'er ye tread;
And o'er your sleep bright shadows, from the wings
Of spirits visiting but youth, be spread;
Yet in those flute-like voices, mingling low,
Is woman's tenderness,— how soon her woe.

Her lot is on you,— silent tears to weep,
And patient smiles to wear through suffering's hour,
And sumless riches, from affection's deep,
To pour on broken reeds,—a wasted shower!
And to make idols, and to find them clay,
And to bewail that worship,— therefore pray!

Her lot is on you,— to be found untired,
Watching the stars out by the bed of pain,
With a pale cheek, and yet a brow inspired,
And a true heart of hope, though hope be vain.
Meekly to bear with wrong, to cheer decay,
And oh! to love through all things,— therefore pray!

And take the thought of this calm vesper time,
With its low murmuring sounds and silvery light,
On through the dark days fading from their prime,
As a sweet dew to keep your souls from blight.
Earth will forsake,— oh! happy to have given
The unbroken heart's first fragrance unto Heaven!

LANDING OF THE PILGRIMS.

THE breaking waves dashed high,
On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
Their giant branches tossed;

And the heavy night hung dark
The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
On the wild New England shore.

Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame·

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear; —
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woods rang
To the anthem of the free!

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest by the white wave's foam;
And the rocking pines of the forest roared —
This was their welcome home!

There were men with hoary hair
Amidst that pilgrim band:
Why had they come to wither there,
Away from their childhood's land?

There was woman's fearless eye,
Lit by her deep love's truth;
There was manhood's brow serenely high,
And the fiery heart of youth.

What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?—
They sought a faith's pure shrine!

Ay, call it holy ground,
The soil where first they trod.
They have left unstained what there they found —
Freedom to worship God.

CALM ON THE BOSOM OF OUR GOD.

CALM on the bosom of our God,
Fair spirit! rest thee now!
E'en while with us thy footsteps trod,
His seal was on thy brow.

Dust to its narrow house beneath!
Soul to its place on high!
They that have seen thy look in death
No more may fear to die.

GEORGE HERBERT.

THE PULLEY.

WHEN God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessing standing by:
Let us (said he) pour on him all we can:
Let the world's riches, which dispersèd lie,
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flow'd, then wisdom, honor, pleasure:
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that alone, of all his treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said he)
Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature:
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness:
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast.

[*From the Church Porch*]

ADVICE ON CHURCH BEHAVIOR.

When once thy foot enters the church, be bare.
God is more there than thou: for thou art there
Only by his permission. Then beware,
And make thyself all reverence and fear.

Kneeling ne'er spoil'd silk stockings: quit thy state.
All equal are within the church's gate.

Resort to sermons, but to prayers most:
Praying's the end of preaching. O be drest;
Stay not for the other pin: why thou hast lost
A joy for it worth worlds. Thus hell doth jest
Away thy blessings, and extremely flout thee,
Thy clothes being fast, but thy soul loose about thee.

In time of service seal up both thine eyes,
And send them to thine heart; that spying sin,
They may weep out the stains by them did rise:
Those doors being shut, all by the ear comes in.
Who marks in church-time other symmetry,
Makes all their beauty his deformity.

Let vain or busy thoughts have there no part:
Bring not thy plough, thy plots, thy pleasure thither
Christ purged the temple; so must thou thy heart.
All worldly thoughts are but these met together
To cozen thee. Look to thy actions well:
For churches either are our heaven or hell.

Judge not the preacher; for he is thy judge:
If thou mislike him, thou conceivest him not.
God calleth preaching folly. Do not grudge
To pick out treasures from an earthen pot.
The worst speak something good: if all want sense,
God takes a text and preaches patience.

[*From the Church Porch.*]

SUM UP AT NIGHT.

Sum up at night, what thou hast done by day;
And in the morning, what thou hast to do.
Dress and undress thy soul: mark the decay
And growth of it: if with thy watch that too
Be down, then wind up both, since we shall be
Most surely judged, make thy accounts agree.

In brief, acquit thee bravely; play the man,
Look not on pleasures as they come, but go.
Defer not the least virtue; life's poor span
Make not an ell, by trifling in thy wo.
If thou do ill, the joy fades, not the pains:
If well; the pain doth fade, the joy remains.

BOSOM SIN.

Lord, with what care hast thou begirt us round!
Parents first season us: then schoolmasters
Deliver us to laws: they send us bound
To rules of reason, holy messengers,

Pulpits and Sundays, sorrow dogging sin,
Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,
Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in,
Bibles laid open, millions of surprises,

Blessings beforehand, ties of gratefulness,
The sound of glory ringing in our ears;
Without, our shame; within, our consciences;
Angels and grace, eternal hopes and fears.

Yet all these fences and their whole array
One cunning bosom-sin blows quite away.

VIRTUE.

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky:
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye,
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses.
A box where sweets compacted lie,
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives;
But though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives.

ROBERT HERRICK.

TO PERILLA.

Ah, my Perilla! dost thou grieve to see
Me, day by day, to steal away from thee?
Age calls me hence, and my gray hairs bid come,
And haste away to mine eternal home;
'T will not be long, Perilla, after this
That I must give thee the supremest kiss.
Dead when I am, first cast in salt, and bring
Part of the cream from that religious spring,
With which, Perilla, wash my hands and feet;
That done, then wind me in that very sheet

Which wrapt thy smooth limbs when thou didst implore
The gods' protection, but the night before;
Follow me weeping to my turf, and there
Let fall a primrose, and with it a tear.
Then lastly, let some weekly strewings be
Devoted to the memory of me;
Then shall my ghost not walk about, but keep
Still in the cool and silent shades of sleep.

THE PRIMROSE.

Ask me why I send you here
This sweet infanta of the year?
Ask me why I send to you
This primrose, thus bepearled with dew?
I will whisper to your ears,
The sweets of love are mixed with tears.
Ask me why this flower does show
So yellow green and sickly too?
Ask me why the stalk is weak
And bending, yet it doth not break?
I will answer, these discover
What fainting hopes are in a lover.

THREE EPITAPHS.

UPON A CHILD

Here she lies, a pretty bud,
Lately made of flesh and blood;
Who so soon fell fast asleep
As her little eyes did peep.
Give her strewings, but not stir,
The earth that lightly covers her!

UPON A CHILD.

Virgins promised when I died,
That they would, each primrose-tide,
Duly morn and evening come,
And with flowers dress my tomb:
Having promised, pay your debts,
Maids, and here strew violets.

UPON A MAID.

Here she lies, in beds of spice,
Fair as Eve in paradise;
For her beauty it was such,
Poets could not praise too much.
Virgins, come, and in a ring
Her supremest requiem sing;
Then depart, but see ye tread
Lightly, lightly o'er the dead.

HOW THE HEART'S EASE FIRST CAME.

Frolic virgins once these were,
Over-loving, living here;
Being here their ends denied,
Ran for sweethearts mad and died.
Love, in pity of their tears,
And their loss of blooming years,
For their restless here-spent hours,
Gave them heart's-ease turned to flowers.

LITANY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.

In the hour of my distress
When temptations me oppress,
And when I my sins confess,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When I lie within my bed,
Sick at heart, and sick in head,
And with doubts discomforted,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the house doth sigh and weep,
And the world is drowned in sleep,
Yet mine eyes the watch do keep,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the artless doctor sees
No one hope, but of his fees,
And his skill runs on the lees,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When his potion and his pill,
His or none or little skill,
Meet for nothing, but to kill —
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the passing bell doth toll,
And the Furies, in a shoal,
Come to fright a parting soul,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the tapers now burn blue,
And the comforters are few.
And that number more than true,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the priest his last hath prayed,
And I nod to what he said
Because my speech is now decayed,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When, God knows, I'm tost about
Either with despair or doubt,
Yet before the glass be out,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the Tempter me pursu'th.
With the sins of all my youth,
And half damns me with untruth
Sweet Spirit, comfort me!

When the flames and hellish cries
Fright mine ears, and fright mine eyes,
And all terrors me surprise,
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

When the judgment is revealed,
And that opened which was sealed —
When to Thee I have appealed.
Sweet Spirit, comfort me.

TO KEEP A TRUE LENT.

Is this a fast — to keep
The larder lean,
And clean
From fat of veals and sheep?

Is it to quit the dish
Of flesh, yet still
To fill
The platter high with fish?

Is it to fast an hour —
Or ragged go —
Or show
A downcast look, and sour?

No! 'tis a fast to dole
Thy sheaf of wheat,
And meat,
Unto the hungry soul.

It is to fast from strife,
From old debate,
And hate —
To circumcise thy life,

To show a heart grief-rent;
To starve thy sin,
Not bin —
And that's to keep thy Lent.

THOMAS KIBBLE HERVEY.

CLEOPATRA EMBARKING ON THE CYDNUS.

Flutes in the sunny air!
And harps in the porphyry halls!
And a low, deep hum like a people's prayer,
With its heart-breathed swells and falls!
And an echo like the desert's call,
Flung back to the shouting shores!
And the river's ripple heard through all,
As it plays with the silver oars!—
The sky is a gleam of gold,
And the amber breezes float
Like thoughts to be dreamed of, but never told,
Around the dancing boat!

She has stepped on the burning sand;
And the thousand tongues are mute,
And the Syrian strikes with a trembling hand
The strings of his gilded lute!
And the Ethiop's heart throbs loud and high
Beneath his white symar,

And the Libyan kneels, as he meets her eye,
Like the flash of an eastern star!
The gales may not be heard,
Yet the silken streamers quiver,
And the vessel shoots, like a bright-plumed bird,
Away down the golden river!

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Away by the lofty mount,
And away by the lonely shore,
And away by the gushing of many a fount,
Where fountains gush no more!—
Oh, for some warning vision there,
Some voice that should have spoken
Of climes to be laid waste and bare
And glad young spirits broken!
Of waters dried away,
And hope and beauty blasted!
That scenes so fair and hearts so gay
Should be so early wasted!

EPITAPH.

Farewell! since nevermore for thee
The sun comes up our earthly skies,
Less bright henceforth shall sunshine be
To some fond hearts and saddened eyes.

There are who, for thy last long sleep,
Shall sleep as sweetly nevermore,
Must weep because thou canst not weep,
And grieve that all thy griefs are o'er.

Sad thrift of love!—the loving breast,
Whereon thine aching head was thrown,
Gave up the weary head, to rest,
But kept the aching for its own,

Till pain shall find the same low bed
That pillows now thy painless head,
And following darkly through the night,
Love reach thee by the founts of light.

THOMAS HEYWOOD.

GOOD-MORROW.

Pack clouds away, and welcome day,
With night we banish sorrow;
Sweet air, blow soft; mount, larks, aloft,
To give my love good-morrow,
Wings from the wind to please her mind,
Notes from the lark I'll borrow;
Bird, prune thy wing, nightingale, sing,
To give my love good-morrow.

Wake from thy nest, robin red-breast,
Sing, birds, in every furrow;
And from each hill let music shrill
Give my fair love good-morrow.
Blackbird and thrush in every bush,
Stare, linnet, and cock-sparrow;
You pretty elves, among yourselves
Sing my fair love good-morrow.

THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON.

DECORATION.

"Manibus date lilia plenis."

'Mid the flower-wreathed tombs I stand,
Bearing lilies in my hand.
Comrades! in what soldier-grave
Sleeps the bravest of the brave?
Is it he who sank to rest
With his colors round his breast?
Friendship makes his tomb a shrine,
Garlands veil it; ask not mine.
One lone grave, yon trees beneath,
Bears no roses, wears no wreath;
Yet no heart more high and warm
Ever dared the battle-storm.

Never gleamed a prouder eye
In the front of victory:
Never foot had firmer tread
On the field where hope lay dead,
Than are hid within this tomb,
Where the untended grasses bloom;
And no stone, with feigned distress,
Mocks the sacred loneliness.

Youth and beauty, dauntless will,
Dreams that life could ne'er fulfil,
Here lie buried — here in peace
Wrongs and woes have found release.

Turning from my comrades' eyes,
Kneeling where a woman lies,
I strew lilies on the grave
Of the bravest of the brave.

GEORGE STILLMAN HILLARD.

LAKE GEORGE.

How oft in visions of the night,
How oft in noonday dreaming,
I've seen, fair lake, thy forest wave,—
Have seen thy waters gleaming;
Have heard the blowing of the winds
That sweep along thy highlands,
And the light laughter of the waves
That dance around thine islands.

It was a landscape of the mind,
With forms and hues ideal,
But still those hues and forms appeared
More lovely than aught real.
I feared to see the breathing scene,
And brooded o'er the vision,
Lest the hard touch of truth should mar
A picture so Elysian.

But now I break the cold distrust
Whose spells so long had bound me;
The shadows of the night are past,—
The morning shines around me.
And in the sober light of day,
I see, with eyes enchanted,
The glorious vision that so long
My day and night dreams haunted.

I see the green, translucent wave,
The purest of earth's fountains:
I see the many-winding shore, —
The double range of mountains:
One, neighbor to the flying clouds,
And crowned with leaf and blossom,
And one, more lovely, borne within
The lake's unruffled bosom.

O timid heart! with thy glad throbs
Some self-reproach is blended.
At the long years that died before
The sight of scene so splendid.
The mind has pictures of its own,
Fair trees and waters flowing —
But not a magic whole like this,
So living, breathing, glowing;

Strength imaged in the wooded hills,
A grand, primeval nature,

And beauty mirrored in the lake,
A gentler, softer feature;
A perfect union, — where no want
Upon the soul is pressing;
Like manly power and female grace
Made one by bridal blessing.

Nor is the stately scene without
Its sweet, secluded treasures,
Where hearts that shun the crowd may find
Their own exclusive pleasures;
Deep chasms of shade for pensive thought,
The hours to wear away in;
And vaulted aisles, of whispering pine,
For lovers' feet to stray in;

Clear streams that from the uplands run,
A course of sunless shadow;
Isles all unfurrowed by the plough,
And strips of fertile meadow;
And rounded coves of silver sand,
Where moonlight plays and glances,—
A sheltered hall for elfin horns,
A floor for elfin dances.

No tame monotony is here,
But beauty ever changing;
With clouds, and shadows of the clouds,
And mists the hillsides ranging.
Where morning's gold, and noon's hot sun,
Their changing glories render;
Pour round the shores a varying light,
Now glowing and now tender.

But purer than the shifting gleams
By liberal sunshine given,
Is the deep spirit of that hour, —
An effluence breathed from heaven;
When the unclouded, yellow moon
Hangs o'er the eastern ridges,
And the long shaft of trembling gold,
The trembling crystal bridges.

Farewell, sweet lake! brief were the hours
Along thy banks for straying;
But not farewell what memory takes, —
An image undecaying.
I hold secure beyond all change
One lovely recollection,
To cheer the hours of lonely toil.
And chase away dejection.

CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN.

MONTEREY.

We were not many, — we who stood
Before the iron sleet that day;
Yet many a gallant spirit would
Give half his years if but he could
Have been with us at Monterey.

Now here, now there, the shot it hailed
In deadly drifts of fiery spray,
Yet not a single soldier quailed
When wounded comrades round them wailed
Their dying shouts at Monterey.

And on, still on our column kept,
Through walls of flame, its withering way;
Where fell the dead, the living stept,
Still charging on the guns which swept
The slippery streets of Monterey.

The foe himself recoiled aghast,
When, striking where he strongest lay,
We swooped his flanking batteries past,

And, braving full their murderous blast,
Stormed home the towers of Monterey.

Our banners on those turrets wave,
And there our evening bugles play;
Where orange boughs above their grave
Keep green the memory of the brave
Who fought and fell at Monterey.

We are not many,—we who pressed
Beside the brave who fell that day:
But who of us has not confessed
He'd rather share their warrior rest
Than not have been at Monterey?

JAMES HOGG.

THE SKYLARK.

Bird of the wilderness
Blithesome and cumberless,
Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
Oh, to abide in the desert with thee!
Wild is thy lay and loud,
Far in the downy cloud,
Love gives it energy, love gave it birth,
Where, on thy dewy wing,
Where art thou journeying?
Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.
O'er fell and fountain sheen,
O'er moor and mountain green,
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day,
Over the cloudlet dim,
Over the rainbow's rim,
Musical cherub, soar, singing, away!
Then, when the gloaming comes,
Low in the heather blooms,
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
Oh, to abide in the desert with thee!

JOSIAH GILBERT HOLLAND.

[*From Bitter-Sweet.*]

A SONG OF DOUBT.

The day is quenched, and the sun is fled;
God has forgotten the world!
The moon is gone, and the stars are dead;
God has forgotten the world!

Evil has won in the horrid feud
Of ages with The Throne;
Evil stands on the neck of Good,
And rules the world alone.

There is no good; there is no God;
And Faith is a heartless cheat
Who bares the back for the Devil's rod,
And scatters thorns for the feet.

What are prayers in the lips of death
Filling and chilling with hail?
What are prayers but wasted breath
Beaten back by the gale?

The day is quenched, and the sun is fled;
God has forgotten the world!
The moon is gone, and the stars are dead;
God has forgotten the world!

[*From Bitter-Sweet.*]

A SONG OF FAITH.

Day will return with a fresher boon;
God will remember the world!
Night will come with a newer moon;
God will remember the world!

Evil is only the slave of Good;
Sorrow the servant of Joy;
And the soul is mad that refuses food
Of the meanest in God's employ.

The fountain of joy is fed by tears,
And love is lit by the breath of sighs;
The deepest griefs and the wildest fears
Have holiest ministries.

Strong grows the oak in the sweeping storm;
Safely the flower sleeps under the snow;
And the farmer's hearth is never warm
Till the cold wind starts to blow.

Day will return with a fresher boon;
God will remember the world!
Night will come with a newer moon;
God will remember the world!

[*From Bitter-Sweet.*]

WHAT IS THE LITTLE ONE THINKING ABOUT?

What is the little one thinking about?
Very wonderful things, no doubt.
Unwritten history!
Unfathomed mystery!
Yet he laughs and cries, and eats and drinks,
And chuckles and crows, and nods and winks,
As if his head were as full of kinks
And curious riddles as any sphinx!
Warped by colic, and wet by tears,
Punctured by pins, and tortured by fears,
Our little nephew will lose two years;
And he'll never know
Where the summers go;—
He need not laugh, for he'll find it so!

Who can tell what a baby thinks?
Who can follow the gossamer links
By which the manikin feels his way
Out from the shore of the great unknown,
Blind, and wailing, and all alone,
Into the light of day?—
Out from the shore of the unknown sea,
Tossing in pitiful agony,—
Of the unknown sea that reels and rolls,
Specked with the barks of little souls,—
Barks that were launched on the other side,
And slipped from heaven on an ebbing tide!
What does he think of his mother's eyes?
What does he think of his mother's hair?
What of the cradle-roof that flies
Forward and backward through the air?
What does he think of his mother's breast,—
Bare and beautiful, smooth and white,
Seeking it ever with fresh delight,—
Cup of his life and couch of his rest?
What does he think when her quick embrace
Presses his hand and buries his face
Deep where the heart-throbs sink and swell
With a tenderness she can never tell,
Though she murmur the words
Of all the birds,—
Words she has learned to murmur well?
Now he thinks he'll go to sleep!
I can see the shadow creep
Over his eyes in soft eclipse,
Over his brow, and over his lips,
Out to his little finger-tips;
Softly sinking, down he goes!
Down he goes! Down he goes!
See! He is hushed in sweet repose!

[*From Bitter-Sweet.*]

STRENGTH THROUGH RESISTED TEMPTATION.

God loves not sin, nor I; but in the throng
Of evils that assail us, there are none
That yield their strength to Virtue's struggling arm
With such munificent reward of power
As great temptations. We may win by toil
Endurance; saintly fortitude by pain;
By sickness, patience; faith and trust by fear;
But the great stimulus that spurs to life,
And crowds to generous development
Each chastened power and passion of the soul,
Is the temptation of the soul to sin,
Resisted, and reconquered, evermore.

[*From Bitter-Sweet.*]

THE PRESS OF SORROW.

Hearts, like apples, are hard and sour,
Till crushed by Pain's resistless power;
And yield their juices rich and bland
To none but Sorrow's heavy hand.
The purest streams of human love
  Flow naturally never,
But gush by pressure from above,
  With God's hand on the lever.
The first are turbidest and meanest;
The last are sweetest and serenest.

[*From Bitter-Sweet.*]

LIFE FROM DEATH.

Life evermore is fed by death,
  In earth and sea and sky;
And, that a rose may breathe its breath,
    Something must die.

Earth is a sepulchre of flowers,
  Whose vitalizing mould
Through boundless transmutation towers,
    In green and gold.

The oak-tree, struggling with the blast,
  Devours its father-tree,
And sheds its leaves and drops its mast,
    That more may be.

The falcon preys upon the finch,
  The finch upon the fly,
And nought will loose the hunger-pinch
    But death's wild cry.

The milk-haired heifer's life must pass
  That it may fill your own,
As passed the sweet life of the grass
    She fed upon.

The power enslaved by yonder cask
  Shall many burdens bear;
Shall nerve the toiler at his task,
    The soul at prayer.

From lowly woe springs lordly joy;
  From humbler good diviner;
The greater life must aye destroy
    And drink the minor.

From hand to hand life's cup is passed
  Up Being's piled gradation,
Till men to angels yield at last
    The rich collation.

[*From Bitter-Sweet.*]

WORTH AND COST.

Thus is it over all the earth!
  That which we call the fairest,
And prize for its surpassing worth,
    Is always rarest.

Iron is heaped in mountain piles,
And gluts the laggard forges:
But gold-flakes gleam in dim defiles
And lonely gorges.

The snowy marble flecks the land
With heaped and rounded ledges,
But diamonds hide within the sand
Their starry edges.

The finny armies clog the twine
That sweeps the lazy river,
But pearls come singly from the brine,
With the pale diver.

God gives no value unto men
Unmatched by meed of labor;
And Cost, of Worth, has ever been
The closest neighbor.

Wide is the gate and broad the way
That opens to perdition,
And countless multitudes are they
Who seek admission.

But strait the gate, the path unkind,
That leads to life immortal,
And few the careful feet that find,
The hidden portal.

All common good has common price;
Exceeding good, exceeding;
Christ bought the keys of Paradise
By cruel bleeding;

And every soul that wins a place
Upon its hills of pleasure,
Must give its all, and beg for grace
To fill the measure.

[*From Bitter-Sweet.*]

CRADLE SONG.

Hither, Sleep! a mother wants thee!
Come with velvet arms!
Fold the baby that she grants thee
To thy own soft charms!

Bear him into Dreamland lightly!
Give him sight of flowers!
Do not bring him back till brightly
Break the morning hours!

Close his eyes with gentle fingers!
Cross his hands of snow!
Tell the angels where he lingers
They must whisper low!

I will guard thy spell unbroken
If thou hear my call;
Come, then, Sleep! I wait the token
Of thy downy thrall.

Now I see his sweet lips moving;
He is in thy keep;
Other milk the babe is proving
At the breast of Sleep!

[*From Bitter-Sweet.*]

TO AN INFANT SLEEPING.

Sleep, babe, the honeyed sleep of innocence!
Sleep like a bud; for soon the sun of life
With ardors quick and passionate shall rise,
And with hot kisses, part the fragrant lips —
The folded petals of thy soul! Alas!
What feverish winds shall tease and toss thee, then!
What pride and pain, ambition and despair,
Desire, satiety, and all that fill
With misery, life's fretful enterprise,
Shall wrench and blanch thee, till thou fall at last,
Joy after joy down-fluttering to the earth,
To be apportioned to the elements!
I marvel, baby, whether it were ill
That he who planted thee should pluck thee now,
And save thee from the blight that comes on all.
I marvel whether it would not be well
That the frail bud should burst in Paradise,
On the full throbbing of an angel's heart!

[*From the Marble Prophecy.*]

THE TYPE OF STRUGGLING HUMANITY.

Laocoön! thou great embodiment
Of human life and human history!
Thou record of the past, thou prophecy
Of the sad future, thou majestic voice,
Pealing along the ages from old time!
Thou wail of agonized humanity!
There lives no thought in marble like to thee!
Thou hast no kindred in the Vatican,
But standest separate among the dreams
Of old mythologies — alone — alone!
The beautiful Apollo at thy side
Is but a marble dream, and dreams are all
The gods and goddesses and fauns and fates
That populate these wondrous halls; but thou,
Standing among them, liftest up thyself
In majesty of meaning, till they sink
Far from the sight, no more significant
Than the poor toys of children. For thou art
A voice from out the world's experience,
Speaking of all the generations past
To all the generations yet to come
Of the long struggle, the sublime despair,
The wild and weary agony of man!

ON THE RIGHI.

On the Righi Kulm we stood,
Lovely Floribel and I,
While the morning's crimson flood
Streamed along the eastern sky.
Reddened every mountain-peak
Into rose from twilight dun;
But the blush upon her cheek
Was not lighted by the sun!

On the Righi Kulm we sat,
Lovely Floribel and I,
Plucking bluebells for her hat
From a mound that blossomed nigh.
"We are near to heaven," she sighed,
While her raven lashes fell.
"Nearer," softly I replied,
"Than the mountain's height may tell."

Down the Righi's side we sped,
Lovely Floribel and I,
But her morning blush had fled
And the bluebells all were dry.
Of the height the dream was born;
Of the lower air it died;
And the passion of the morn
Flagged and fell at eventide.

From the breast of blue Lucerne,
Lovely Floribel and I
Saw the brand of sunset burn
On the Righi Kulm, and die.
And we wondered, gazing thus,
If our dream would still remain
On the height, and wait for us
Till we climb to heaven again!

WHAT WILL IT MATTER?

If life awake and will never cease
On the future's distant shore,
And the rose of love and the lily of peace
Shall bloom there forevermore,—

Let the world go round and round,
And the sun sink into the sea;
For whether I'm on or under the ground,
Oh, what will it matter to me?

SAXE HOLME.

THREE KISSES OF FAREWELL.

Three, only three, my darling,
  Separate, solemn, slow;
Not like the swift and joyous ones,
  We used to know
When we kissed because we loved each other
  Simply to taste love's sweet,
And lavished our kisses as the summer
  Lavishes heat;—
But as they kiss whose hearts are wrung,
  When hope and fear are spent,
And nothing is left to give except
  A sacrament!

First of the three, my darling,
  Is sacred unto pain;
We have hurt each other often:
  We shall again,
When we pine because we miss each other,
  And do not understand.
How the written words are so much colder
  Than eye and hand.
I kiss thee, dear, for all such pain
  Which we may give or take;
Buried, forgiven, before it comes,
  For our love's sake!

The second kiss, my darling,
  Is full of joy's sweet thrill;
We have blessed each other always;
  We always will.
We shall reach till we feel each other,
  Past all of time and space;
We shall listen till we hear each other
  In every place;
The earth is full of messengers
  Which love sends to and fro;
I kiss thee, darling, for all joy
  Which we shall know!

The last kiss, oh, my darling,
  My love — I cannot see
Through my tears, as I remember
  What it may be.
We may die and never see each other,
  Die with no time to give
Any sign that our hearts are faithful
  To die, as live.
Token of what they will not see
  Who see our parting breath,
This one last kiss, my darling, seals
  The seal of death!

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

THE VOICELESS.

We count the broken lyres that rest
  Where the sweet wailing singers slumber,
But o'er their silent sister's breast
  The wild-flowers who will stoop to number?
A few can touch the magic string,
  And noisy fame is proud to win them: —
Alas for those that never sing,
  But die with all their music in them!

Nay, grieve not for the dead alone
  Whose song has told their hearts' sad story, —
Weep for the voiceless, who have known
  The cross without the crown of glory!
Not where Leucadian breezes sweep
  O'er Sappho's memory-haunted billow,
But where the glistening night-dews weep
  On nameless Sorrow's churchyard pillow.

O hearts that break and give no sign
Save whitening lip and fading tresses,
Till Death pours out his cordial wine
Slow-dropped from Misery's crushing presses, —
If singing breath or echoing chord
To every hidden pang were given,
What endless melodies were poured,
As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!

DOROTHY Q.

A FAMILY PORTRAIT.

GRANDMOTHER'S mother: her age I guess,
Thirteen summers, or something less;
Girlish bust, but womanly air:
Smooth, square forehead with uprolled hair.
Lips that lover has never kissed;
Taper fingers and slender wrist;
Hanging sleeves of stiff brocade;
So they painted the little maid.

On her hand a parrot green
Sits unmoving and broods serene.
Hold up the canvas full in view, —
Look! there's a rent the light shines through,
Dark with a century's fringe of dust, —
That was a Red-Coat's rapier-thrust!
Such is the tale the lady old,
Dorothy's daughter's daughter told.

Who the painter was none may tell, —
One whose best was not over well;
Hard and dry, it must be confessed,
Flat as a rose that has long been pressed:
Yet in her cheek the hues are bright,
Dainty colors of red and white,
And in her slender shape are seen
Hint and promise of stately mien.

Look not on her with eyes of scorn, —
Dorothy Q. was a lady born!
Ay! since the galloping Normans came,
England's annals have known her name;
And still to the three-hilled rebel town
Dear is that ancient name's renown,
For many a civic wreath they won,
The youthful sire and the gray-haired son.

O Damsel Dorothy! Dorothy Q.!
Strange is the gift that I owe to you;
Such a gift as never a king
Save to daughter or son might bring,
All my tenure of heart and hand,
All my title to house and land;
Mother and sister and child and wife
And joy and sorrow and death and life!

What if a hundred years ago
Those close-shut lips had answered No,
When forth the tremulous question came
That cost the maiden her Norman name,
And under the folds that look so still
The bodice swelled with the bosom's thrill?
Should I be I, or would it be
One tenth another to nine-tenths me?

Soft is the breath of a maiden's YES:
Not the light gossamer stirs with less;
But never a cable that holds so fast
Through all the battles of wave and blast,
And never an echo of speech or song
That lives in the babbling air so long!
There were tones in the voice that whispered then
You may hear to-day in a hundred men.

O lady and lover, how faint and far
Your images hover, — and here we are,
Solid and stirring in flesh and bone, —
Edward's and Dorothy's — all their own, —
A goodly record for time to show
Of a syllable spoken so long ago: —
Shall I bless you, Dorothy, or forgive
For the tender whisper that bade me live?

It shall be a blessing, my little maid!
I will heal the stab of the Red-Coat's blade,
And freshen the gold of the tarnished frame,
And gild with a rhyme your household name:
So you shall smile on us brave and bright
As first you greeted the morning's light,
And live untroubled by woes and fears
Through a second youth of a hundred years.

UNDER THE VIOLETS.

Her hands are cold; her face is white;
No more her pulses come and go;
Her eyes are shut to life and light;—
Fold the white vesture, snow on snow,
And lay her where the violets blow.

But not beneath a graven stone,
To plead for tears with alien eyes;
A slender cross of wood alone
Shall say, that here a maiden lies,
In peace beneath the peaceful skies.

And gray old trees of hugest limb
Shall wheel their circling shadows round
To make the scorching sunlight dim
That drinks the greenness from the ground,
And drop their dead leaves on her mound.

When o'er their boughs the squirrels run,
And through their leaves the robins call,
And ripening in the autumn sun.
The acorns and the chestnuts fall,
Doubt not that she will heed them all.

For her the morning choir shall sing
Its matins from the branches high,
And every minstrel-voice of Spring,
That trills beneath the April sky,
Shall greet her with its earliest cry.

When turning round their dial track,
Eastward the lengthening shadows pass,
Her little mourners, clad in black,
The crickets, sliding through the grass,
Shall pipe for her an evening mass.

At last the rootlets of the trees
Shall find the prison where she lies,
And bear the buried dust they seize.
In leaves and blossoms to the skies
So may the soul that warmed it rise!

If any, born of kindlier blood,
Should ask, What maiden lies below?
Say only this: A tender bud,
That tried to blossom in the snow,
Lies withered where the violets blow.

NEARING THE SNOW-LINE.

Slow toiling upward from the misty vale,
I leave the bright enamelled zones below;
No more for me their beauteous bloom shall glow,
Their lingering sweetness load the morning gale;
Few are the slender flowerets, scentless, pale,
That on their ice-clad stems, all trembling blow
Along the margin of unmelting snow;
Yet with unsaddened voice thy verge I hail.

White realm of peace above the flowering line,
Welcome thy frozen domes, thy rocky spires!
O'er thee undimmed the moon-girt planets shine,
On thy majestic altars fade the fires
That filled the air with smoke of vain desires,
And all the unclouded blue of heaven is thine!

THE TWO STREAMS.

BEHOLD the rocky wall
That down its sloping sides
Pours the swift rain-drops, blending as they fall,
In rushing river-tides!

Yon stream, whose sources run
Turned by a pebble's edge,
Is Athabasca, rolling towards the sun
Through the cleft mountain-ledge.

The slender rill had strayed,
But for the slanting stone,
To evening's ocean, with the tangled braid
Of foam-flecked Oregon.

So from the heights of Will
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns its slender rill,
Each widening torrent bends, —

From the same cradle's side,
From the same mother's knee, —
One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the Peaceful Sea!

HYMN OF TRUST.

O LOVE Divine, that stoopedst to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear,
On Thee we cast each earth-born care,
We smile at pain while Thou art near!

Though long the weary way we tread,
And sorrow crown each lingering year,
No path we shun, no darkness dread,
Our hearts still whispering, Thou art near!

When drooping pleasure turns to grief,
And trembling faith is changed to fear,
The murmuring wind, the quivering leaf,
Shall softly tell us, Thou art near!

On Thee we fling our burdening woe,
O Love Divine, forever dear,
Content to suffer while we know,
Living and dying, Thou art near!

THOMAS HOOD.

MELANCHOLY.

[*From the Ode thereon.*]

Lo! here the best, the worst, the world
Doth now remember or forget
Are in one common ruin hurled;
And love and hate are calmly met —
The loveliest eyes that ever shone,
The fairest hands, and locks of jet.
Is 't not enough to vex our souls
And fill our eyes, that we have set
Our love upon a rose's leaf,
Our hearts upon a violet?
Blue eyes, red cheeks, are frailer yet;
And, sometimes, at their swift decay
Beforehand we must fret.
The roses bud and bloom again;
But love may haunt the grave of love,
And watch the mould in vain.

O clasp me, sweet, whilst thou art mine,
And do not take my tears amiss;
For tears must flow to wash away
A thought that shows so stern as this.
Forgive, if somewhile I forget,
In woe to come, the present bliss,
As frighted Proserpine let fall
Her flowers at the sight of Dis.
E'en so the dark and bright will kiss;
The sunniest things throw sternest shade;
And there is even a happiness
That makes the heart afraid!
Now let us with a spell invoke
The full-orbed moon to grieve our eyes;
Not bright, not bright — but with a cloud
Lapped all about her, let her rise
All pale and dim, as if from rest.
The ghost of the late buried sun
Had crept into the skies.
The moon! she is the source of sighs,
The very face to make us sad,
If but to think in other times
The same calm, quiet look she had,
As if the world held nothing base,
Or vile and mean, or fierce and bad —
The same fair light that shone in streams,
The fairy lamp that charmed the lad;
For so it is, with spent delights
She taunts men's brains, and makes them mad

All things are touched with melancholy,
Born of the secret soul's mistrust
To feel her fair ethereal wings
Weighed down with vile, degraded dust.
Even the bright extremes of joy
Bring on conclusions of disgust —
Like the sweet blossoms of the May,
Whose fragrance ends in must.
Oh, give her then her tribute just,
Her sighs and tears, and musings holy!
There is no music in the life
That sounds with idiot laughter solely;
There's not a string attuned to mirth,
But has its chord in melancholy.

TO A CHILD EMBRACING HIS MOTHER.

Love thy mother, little one!
Kiss and clasp her neck again, —
Hereafter she may have a son
Will kiss and clasp her neck in vain.
Love thy mother, little one!

Gaze upon her living eyes,
And mirror back her love for thee, —
Hereafter thou may'st shudder sighs
To meet them when they cannot see.
Gaze upon her living eyes!

Press her lips the while they glow
With love that they have often told,
Hereafter thou mayest press in woe,
And kiss them till thine own are cold,
Press her lips the while they glow!

Oh, revere her raven hair!
Although it be not silver-gray —
Too early Death, led on by Care,
May snatch save one dear lock away.
Oh! revere her raven hair!

Pray for her at eve and morn,
That Heaven may long the stroke defer,—
For thou may'st live the hour forlorn
When thou wilt ask to die with her.
Pray for her at eve and morn!

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER.

I remember, I remember
The house where I was born,
The little window where the sun
Came peeping in at morn;
He never came a wink too soon;

Nor brought too long a day;
But now, I often wish the night
Had borne my breath away!

I remember, I remember
The roses, red and white,
The violets, and the lily-cups —
Those flowers made of light!
The lilacs where the robin built
And where my brother set
The laburnum on his birthday, —
The tree is living yet!

I remember, I remember
Where I was used to swing,
And thought the air must rush as fresh
To swallows on the wing;
My spirit flew in feathers then,
That is so heavy now,
And summer pools could hardly cool
The fever on my brow!

I remember, I remember
The fir-trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky.
It was a childish ignorance,
But now 't is little joy
To know I'm farther off from heaven
Than when I was a boy.

THE DEATH-BED.

We watched her breathing through the night
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied —
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came, dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed — she had
Another morn than ours.

THE SONG OF THE SHIRT.

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread —
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt;
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch
She sang the "Song of the Shirt!"

"Work! work! work!
While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work — work — work,
Till the stars shine through the roof!
It's oh! to be a slave
Along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save,
If this is Christian work!

"Work — work — work
Till the brain begins to swim!
Work — work — work
Till the eyes are heavy and dim
Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam —
Till over the buttons I fall asleep,
And sew them on in a dream!

"O men, with sisters dear!
O men, with mothers and wives!
It is not linen you're wearing out!
But human creatures' lives!
Stitch — stitch — stitch,
In poverty, hunger, and dirt —
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
A shroud as well as a shirt!

"But why do I talk of Death —
That phantom of grisly bone?
I hardly fear his terrible shape,
It seems so like my own —

It seems so like my own
Because of the fasts I keep;
O God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap!

"Work — work — work!
My labor never flags;
And what are its wages? A bed of straw,
A crust of bread, and rags.
That shattered roof, and this naked floor;
A table, a broken chair;
And a wall so blank my shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there!

"Work — work — work!
From weary chime to chime!
Work — work — work —
As prisoners work for crime!
Band, and gusset, and seam,
Seam, and gusset, and band —
Till the heart is sick and the brain benumbed,
As well as the weary hand.

"Work — work — work
In the dull December light!
And work — work — work,
When the weather is warm and bright! —
While underneath the eaves
The brooding swallows cling.
As if to show me their sunny backs,
And twit me with the spring.

"O! but to breathe the breath
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet—
With the sky above my head,
And the grass beneath my feet!
For only one short hour
To feel as I used to feel,
Before I knew the woes of want
And the walk that costs a meal!

"O! but for one short hour —
A respite however brief!
No blessed leisure for love or hope,
But only time for grief!
A little weeping would ease my heart;
But in their briny bed
My tears must stop, for every drop
Hinders needle and thread!"

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread —
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger, and dirt;
And still, with a voice of dolorous pitch —
Would that its tone could reach the rich! —
She sang this "Song of the Shirt!"

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS.

One more unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care!
Fashioned so slenderly —
Young, and so fair!

Look at her garments
Clinging like cerements,
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing;
Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing!

Touch her not scornfully!
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly —
Not of the stains of her;
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny,
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers,
One of Eve's family —
Wipe those poor lips of hers,
Oozing so clammily.

Loop up her tresses
Escaped from the comb —

Her fair auburn tresses —
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home?

Who was her father?
Who was her mother?
Had she a sister?
Had she a brother?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other?

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed —
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light
From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver:
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river;
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurled —
Any where, any where
Out of the world!

In she plunged boldly —
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran —
Over the brink of it!
Picture it — think of it!
Dissolute man!
Lave in it, drink of it,
Then, if you can!

Take her up tenderly —
Lift her with care!
Fashioned so slenderly —
Young and so fair!

Ere her limbs frigidly,
Stiffen too rigidly.
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurred by contumely,
Cold inhumanity
Burning insanity
Into her rest!
Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behavior,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Saviour!

FAREWELL, LIFE!

Farewell, Life! my senses swim,
And the world is growing dim:
Thronging shadows cloud the light,
Like the advent of the night —
Colder, colder, colder still,
Upwards steals a vapor chill;
Strong the earthy odor grows —
I smell the mould above the rose!

Welcome, Life! the spirit strives:
Strength returns, and hope revives;
Cloudy fears and shapes forlorn
Fly like shadows at the morn —
O'er the earth there comes a bloom;
Sunny light for sullen gloom,
Warm perfume for vapor cold —
I smell the rose above the mould!

BALLAD.

It was not in the winter
Our loving lot was cast;
It was the time of roses —
We plucked them as we passed!

That churlish season never frowned
On early lovers yet!
O, no — the world was newly crowned
With flowers when first we met.

'T was twilight, and I bade you go —
But still you held me fast;
It was the time of roses, —
We plucked them as we passed!

TRUE DEATH.

It is not death, that some time in a sigh
This eloquent breath shall take its speechless flight;
That some time these bright stars, that now reply
In sunlight to the sun, shall set in night;
That this warm conscious flesh shall perish quite,
And all life's ruddy springs forget to flow;
That thought shall cease, and the immortal sprite
Be lapped in alien clay and laid below;
It is not death to know this — but to know
That pious thoughts, which visit at new graves
In tender pilgrimage, will cease to go
So duly and so oft, — and when grass waves
Over the past-away, there may be then
No resurrection in the minds of men.

LOVE BETTERED BY TIME.

Love, dearest lady, such as I would speak,
Lives not within the humor of the eye;
Not being but an outward phantasy
That skims the surface of a tinted cheek, —
Else it would wane with beauty, and grow weak,
As if the rose made summer — and so lie
Amongst the perishable things that die,
Unlike the love which I would give and seek;
Whose health is of no hue — to feel decay
With cheeks' decay, that have a rosy prime.
Love is its own great loveliness alway,
And takes new beauties from the touch of time;
Its bough owns no December and no May,
But bears its blossoms into winter's clime.

◆

GEORGE HOUGHTON.

[*From The Legend of St. Olaf's Kirk.*]

VALBORG WATCHING AXEL'S DEPARTURE.

At kirk knelt Valborg, the cold altar-stone
Reeling beneath her. Filled with choking grief
She could not say good-bye, but by a page
Her rosary sent him; and when he had climbed
His horse, and on the far-off bridge she heard

The dull tramp of his troopers, up she fared
By stair and ladder to old Steindor's post, —
For he was mute, and could not nettle her
With words' cheap guise of sympathy. There perched
Beside him up among the dusty bells,
She pushed her face between the mullions, looked
Across the world of snow, lighted like day
By moon and moor-ild; saw with misty eyes
A gleam of steel, an eagle's feather tall;
And through the clear air watched it, tossing, pass
Across the sea-line; saw the ship lift sail
And blow to southward, catching light and shade
As 'mong the sheers and skerries it picked out
A crooked pathway; saw it round the ness,
And, catching one last flicker of the moon,
Fade into nothingness. With desolate steps
She left the bellman and crept down the stairs;
Heard all the air re-echoing: "He is gone!" —
Felt a great sob behind her lips, and tears
Flooding the sluices of her eyes; turned toward
The empty town, and for the first time saw
That Nidaros was small and irksome, felt
First time her tether galling, and, by heaven!
Wished she'd been born a man-child, free to fare
Unhindered through the world's wide pastures, free
To stand this hour with Axel as his squire.
And with him brave the sea-breeze. Aimlessly
She sought the scattered gold-threads that had formed
Life's glowing texture: but how dull they seemed!
How bootless the long waste of lagging weeks,
With dull do-over of mean drudgeries,
And miserable cheer of pitying mouths
Whistling and whipping through small round of change
Their cowering pack of saw and circumstance!
How slow the crutches of the limping years!

[*Six Quatrains from Album-Leaves.*]

COURAGE.

DARKNESS before, all joy behind!
Yet keep thy courage, do not mind:
He soonest reads the lesson right
Who reads with back against the light!

AMBITION.

THE palace with its splendid dome,
That nearest to the sky aspires,
Is first to challenge storms that roam
Above it, and call down their fires.

THIS NAME OF MINE.

THIS name of mine the sun may steal away,
Fierce fire consume it, moths eat name and day;
Or mildew's hand may smooch it with decay, —
But not my love, for that shall live alway.

REGRET.

I'VE regretted most sincerely,
I've repented deeply, long;
But to those I've loved most dearly,
I've oftenest done wrong.

PURITY.

Let your truth stand sure,
And the world is true;
Let your heart keep pure —
And the world will, too.

CHARITY.

He erred, no doubt, perhaps he sinned;
Shall I then dare to cast a stone?
Perhaps this blotch, on a garment white,
Counts less than the dingy robes I own.

[From Album-Leaves.]

DAISY.

I gave my little girl back to the daisies,
From them it was that she took her name;
I gave my precious one back to the daisies,
From where they caught their color she came;
And now, when I look in the face of a daisy,
My little girl's face I see, I see!
My tears, down dropping, with theirs commingle,
And they give my precious one back to me.

LORD HOUGHTON (RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES).

SINCE YESTERDAY.

I'm not where I was yesterday,
Though my home be still the same,
For I have lost the veriest friend
Whomever a friend could name;
I'm not where I was yesterday,
Though change there be little to see,
For a part of myself has lapsed away
From Time to Eternity.

I have lost a thought that many a year
Was most familiar food
To my inmost mind, by night or day,
In merry or plaintive mood;
I have lost a hope, that many a year
Looked far on a gleaming way,
When the walls of Life were closing round,
And the sky was sombre gray.

. . . .

I thought, how should I see him first,
How should our hands first meet,
Within his room, — upon the stair, —
At the corner of the street?
I thought, where should I hear him first,
How catch his greeting tone, —
And thus I went up to his door,
And they told me he was gone!

Oh! what is Life but a sum of love,
And Death but to lose it all?
Weeds be for those that are left behind,
And not for those that fall!
And now how mighty a sum of love
Is lost for ever to me . . . . .
No, I'm not what I was yesterday,
Though change there be little to see.

LABOR.

Heart of the people! Working men!
Marrow and nerve of human powers;
Who on your sturdy backs sustain
Through streaming time this world of ours;
Hold by that title, — which proclaims,
That ye are undismayed and strong,
Accomplishing whatever aims
May to the sons of earth belong.

. . . .

And he who still and silent sits
In closèd room or shady nook,
And seems to nurse his idle wits
With folded arms or open book: —
To things now working in *that* mind,
Your children's children well may owe
Blessings that hope has ne'er defined
Till from his busy thoughts they flow.

Thus all must work — with head or hand,
For self or others, good or ill:
Life is ordained to bear, like land,
Some fruit, be fallow as it will;
Evil has force itself to sow
Where we deny the healthy seed, —
And all our choice is this, — to grow
Pasture and grain or noisome weed.

Then in content possess your hearts,
Unenvious of each other's lot, —
For those which seem the easiest parts
Have travail which ye reckon not:
And he is bravest, happiest, best,
Who, from the task within his span
Earns for himself his evening rest,
And an increase of good for man.

I WANDERED BY THE BROOK-SIDE.

I WANDERED by the brook-side,
I wandered by the mill, —
I could not hear the brook flow,
The noisy wheel was still;
There was no burr of grasshopper,
No chirp of any bird,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

I sat beneath the elm-tree,
I watched the long, long shade,
And as it grew still longer,
I did not feel afraid;
For I listened for a footfall,
I listened for a word, —
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

He came not, — no, he came not, —
The night came on alone, —
The little stars sat one by one,
Each on his golden throne;
The evening air passed by my cheek
The leaves above were stirred;
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.

Fast silent tears were flowing,
When something stood behind,
A hand was on my shoulder,
I knew its touch was kind:
It drew me nearer — nearer,
We did not speak one word;
For the beating of our own hearts
Was all the sound we heard.

THE WORTH OF HOURS.

BELIEVE not that your inner eye
Can ever in just measure try
The worth of hours as they go by:

For every man's weak self, alas!
Makes him to see them, while they pass,
As through a dim or tinted glass:

But if in earnest care you would
Mete out to each its part of good,
Trust rather to your after-mood.

Those surely are not fairly spent,
That leave your spirit bowed and bent
In sad unrest and ill-content:

And more, — though free from seeming harm,
You rest from toil of mind or arm,
Or slow retire from Pleasure's charm, —

If then a painful sense comes on
Of something wholly lost and gone,
Vainly enjoyed, or vainly done, —

Of something from your being's chain,
Broke off, nor to be linked again
By all mere memory can retain. —

Upon your heart this truth may rise,—
Nothing that altogether dies
Suffices man's just destinies:

So should we live, that every hour
May die as dies the natural flower,—
A self-reviving thing of power;

That every thought and every deed
May hold within itself the seed
Of future good and future need:

Esteeming sorrow, whose employ
Is to develop not destroy.
Far better than a barren joy.

FOREVER UNCONFESSED.

They seemed to those who saw them meet
The worldly friends of every day,
Her smile was undisturbed and sweet,
His courtesy was free and gay.

But yet if one the other's name
In some unguarded moment heard,
The heart you thought so calm and tame,
Would struggle like a captured bird:

And letters of mere formal phrase
Were blistered with repeated tears,—
And this was not the work of days,
But had gone on for years and years!

Alas, that Love was not too strong
For maiden shame and manly pride!
Alas, that they delayed too long
The goal of mutual bliss beside.

Yet what no chance could then reveal,
And neither would be first to own,
Let fate and courage now conceal,
When truth could bring remorse alone.

DIVORCED.

We that were friends, yet are not now,
We that must daily meet
With ready words and courteous bow,
Acquaintance of the street;
We must not scorn the holy past,
We must remember still
To honor feelings that outlast
The reason and the will.

I might reprove thy broken faith,
I might recall the time
When thou wert chartered mine till death,
Through every fate and clime;
When every letter was a vow,
And fancy was not free
To dream of ended love; and thou
Wouldst say the same of me.

No, no, 'tis not for us to trim
The balance of our wrongs,
Enough to leave remorse to him
To whom remorse belongs!
Let our dead friendship be to us
A desecrated name,
Unutterable, mysterious,
A sorrow and a shame.

A sorrow that two souls which grew
Encased in mutual bliss,
Should wander, callous strangers, through
So cold a world as this!
A shame that we, whose hearts had earned
For life an early heaven,
Should be like angels self-returned
To Death, when once forgiven!

Let us remain as living signs,
Where they that run may read
Pain and disgrace in many lines,
As of a loss indeed;
That of our fellows any who
The prize of love have won
May tremble at the thought to do
The thing that we have done!

ALL THINGS ONCE ARE THINGS FOR EVER.

ALL things once are things for ever;
Soul, once living, lives for ever;
Blame not what is only once,
When that once endures for ever;
Love, once felt, though soon forgot
Moulds the heart to good for ever;
Once betrayed from childly faith,
Man is conscious man for ever;
Once the void of life revealed,
It must deepen on for ever,
Unless God fill up the heart
With himself for once and ever:
Once made God and man at once,
God and man are one for ever.

JULIA WARD HOWE.

BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC.

MINE eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword,
His truth is marching on.

I have seen him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps,
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on!"

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment-seat;
Oh! be swift, my soul, to answer him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me;
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on!

[*From Thoughts in Père la Chaise.*]

IMAGINED REPLY OF ELOISA TO THE POET'S QUESTIONING.

. . . . .

"WHAT was I cannot tell — thou know'st our story,
Know'st how we stole God's treasure from on high;
Without heaven's virtue we had heaven's glory,
Too justly our delights were doomed to die.

.

"Intense as were our blisses, e'en so painful
The keen privation it was ours to share;
All states, all places barren proved and baneful,
Dead stones grew pitiful at our despair;

"Till, to the cloister's solitude repairing,
Our feet the way of holier sorrows trod,
Hid from each other, yet together sharing
The labor of the Providence of God

"Often at midnight, on the cold stone lying,
My passionate sobs have rent the passive air,
While my crisped fingers clutched the pavement, trying
To hold him fast, as he had still been there.

"I called, I shrieked, till my spent breath came faintly,
I sank, in pain Christ's martyrs could not bear;
Then dreamed I saw him, beautiful and saintly,
As his far convent tolled the hour of prayer.

"Solemn and deep that vision of reunion —
He passed in robe, and cowl, and sandall'd feet,
But our dissever'd lips held no communion,
Our long divorcèd glances could not meet.

"Then slowly, from that hunger of sensation,
That rage for happiness, which makes it sin,
I rose to calmer, wider contemplation,
And knew the Holiest, and his discipline.

"O thou who call'st on me! if that thou bearest
A wounded heart beneath thy woman's vest,
If thou my mournful earthly fortune sharest,
Share the high hopes that calmed my fever'd breast.

"Not vainly do I boast Religion's power,
Faith dawned upon the eyes with Sorrow dim;
I toiled and trusted, till there came an hour
That saw me sleep in God, and wake with *him*.

"Seek comfort thus, for all life's painful losing,
Compel from Sorrow merit and reward,
And sometimes wile a mournful hour in musing
How Eloïsa loved her Abelard."

The voice fled heav'nward ere its spell was broken, —
I stretched a tremulous hand within the grate,
And bore away a ravished rose, in token
Of woman's highest love and hardest fate.

STANZAS FROM THE "TRIBUTE TO A SERVANT."

Oh! grief that wring'st mine eyes with tears,
Demand not from my lips a song;
That fated gift of early years
I've loved too well, I've nursed too long.

What boot my verses to the heart
That breath of mine no more shall stir?
Where were the piety of Art,
If thou wert silent over her?

This was a maiden, light of foot,
Whose bloom and laughter, fresh and free,
Flitted like sunshine, in and out
Among my little ones and me.

Hers was the power to quell and charm;
The ready wit that children love;
The faithful breast, the shielding arm
Pillowed in sleep my tenderest dove.

She played in all the nursery plays,
She ruled in all its little strife;
A thousand genial ways endeared
Her presence to my daily life.

She ranged my hair with gem or flower,
Careful, the festal draperies hung,
Or plied her needle, hour by hour
In cadence with the song I sung.

My highest joy she could not share,
Nor fathom sorrow's deep abyss;
For *that*, she wore a smiling air,
She hung her head and pined for *this*.

"And she shall live with me," I said,
"Till all my pretty ones be grown;
I'll give my girls my little maid,
The gayest thing I call my own."

Or else, methought, some farmer bold
Should woo and win my gentle Lizzie,
And I should stock her house fourfold,
Be with her wedding blithely busy.

But lo! Consumption's spectral form
Sucks from her lips the flickering breath;
In these pale flowers, these tear-drops warm,
I bring the mournful dower of Death.

. . . . .

I could but say, with faltering voice
And eyes that glanced aside to weep,
"Be strong in faith and hope, my child;
He giveth his belovèd sleep.

"And though thou walk the shadowy vale,
Whose end we know not, He will aid;
His rod and staff shall stay thy steps;"
"I know it well," she smiled and said.

She knew it well, and knew yet more
My deepest hope, though unexprest,
The hope that God's appointed sleep
But heightens ravishment with rest.

My children, living flowers, shall come
And strew with seed this grave of thine,
And bid the blushing growths of spring
Thy dreary painted cross entwine.

Thus Faith, cast out of barren creeds,
Shall rest in emblems of her own;
Beauty, still springing from Decay,
The cross-wood budding to the crown.

THE DEAD CHRIST.

TAKE the dead Christ to my chamber
  The Christ I brought from Rome;
Over all the tossing ocean,
  He has reached his western home;
Bear him as in procession,
  And lay him solemnly
Where, through weary night and morning,
  He shall bear me company.

The name I bear is other
  Than than that I bore by birth,
And I've given life to children
  Who'll grow and dwell on earth;
But the time comes swiftly towards me
  (Nor do I bid it stay),
When the dead Christ will be more to me
  Than all I hold to-day.

Lay the dead Christ beside me,
  Oh, press him on my heart,
I would hold him long and painfully
  Till the weary tears should start;
Till the divine contagion
  Heal me of self and sin,
And the cold weight press wholly down
  The pulse that chokes within.

Reproof and frost, they fret me,
  Towards the free, the sunny lands,
From the chaos of existence
  I stretch these feeble hands;
And, penitential, kneeling,
  Pray God would not be wroth,
Who gave not the strength of feeling,
  And strength of labor both.

Thou 'rt but a wooden carving,
  Defaced of worms, and old;
Yet more to me thou couldst not be
  Wert thou all wrapt in gold.

Like the gem-bedizened baby
Which, at the Twelfth-day noon,
They show from the Ara Cœli's steps,
To a merry dancing-tune.

I ask of thee no wonders,
No changing white or red;
I dream not thou art living,
I love and prize thee dead.
That salutary deadness
I seek, through want and pain,
From which God's own high power can bid
Our virtue rise again.

WILLIAM DEANE HOWELLS.

THE MYSTERIES.

Once on my mother's breast, a child, I crept,
Holding my breath;
There, safe and sad, lay shuddering, and wept
At the dark mystery of Death.

Weary and weak, and worn with all unrest,
Spent with the strife. —
O mother, let me weep upon thy breast
At the sad mystery of Life!

THANKSGIVING.

Lord, for the erring thought
Not into evil wrought:
Lord, for the wicked will
Betrayed and baffled still:
For the heart from itself kept,
Our thanksgiving accept.

For ignorant hopes that were
Broken to our blind prayer:
For pain, death, sorrow, sent
Unto our chastisement:
For all loss of seeming good,
Quicken our gratitude.

CONVENTION.

He falters on the threshold,
She lingers on the stair;
Can it be that was his footstep?
Can it be that she is there?

Without is tender yearning,
And tender love is within;
They can hear each other's heart-beats,
But a wooden door is between.

THE POET'S FRIENDS.

The robin sings in the elm;
The cattle stand beneath
Sedate and grave with great brown eyes
And fragrant meadow-breath.

They listen to the flattered bird,
The wise-looking, stupid things;
And they never understand a word
Of all the robin sings.

THE MULBERRIES.

On the Rialto Bridge we stand;
The street ebbs under and makes no sound;
But, with bargains shrieked on every hand,
The noisy market rings around.

"*Mulberries, fine mulberries, here!*"
A tuneful voice, — and light, light measure;
Though I hardly should count these mulberries dear,
If I paid three times the price for my pleasure.

Brown hands splashed with mulberry blood,
The basket wreathed with mulberry leaves
Hiding the berries beneath them; — good!
Let us take whatever the young rogue gives.

For you know, old friend, I haven 't eaten
A mulberry since the ignorant joy
Of anything sweet in the mouth could sweeten
All this bitter world for a boy.

O, I mind the tree in the meadow stood
By the road near the hill: where I climbed aloof
On its branches, this side of the girdled wood,
I could see the top of our cabin roof.

And, looking westward, could sweep the shores
Of the river where we used to swim,
Under the ghostly sycamores,
Haunting the waters smooth and dim;

And eastward athwart the pasture-lot
And over the milk-white buckwheat field
I could see the stately elm, where I shot
The first black squirrel I ever killed.

And southward over the bottom-land
I could see the mellow breadth of farm
From the river-shores to the hills expand,
Clasped in the curving river's arm.

In the fields we set our guileless snares
For rabbits and pigeons and wary quails,
Content with vaguest feathers and hairs
From doubtful wings and vanished tails.

And in the blue summer afternoon
We used to sit in the mulberry-tree;
The breaths of wind that remembered June
Shook the leaves and glittering berries free;

And while we watched the wagons go
Across the river, along the road,
To the mill above, or the mill below,
With horses that stooped to the heavy load,

We told old stories and made new plans,
And felt our hearts gladden within us again,
For we did not dream that this life of a man's
Could ever be what we know as men.

We sat so still that the woodpeckers came
And pillaged the berries overhead;
From his log the chipmonk, waxen tame,
Peered and listened to what we said.

One of us long ago was carried
To his grave on the hill above the tree;
One is a farmer there, and married;
One has wandered over the sea.

And, if you ask me, I hardly know
Whether I'd be the dead or the clown, —
The clod above or the clay below. —
Or this listless dust by fortune blown

To alien lands. For, however it is,
So little we keep with us in life;
At best we win only victories,
Not peace, not peace, O friend, in this strife.

But if I could turn from the long defeat
Of the little successes once more, and be
A boy, with the whole wide world at my feet
Under the shade of the mulberry tree, —

From the shame of the squandered chances, the sleep
Of the will that cannot itself awaken,
From the promise the future can never keep,
From the fitful purposes vague and shaken, —

Then, while the grasshopper sung out shrill
In the grass beneath the blanching thistle,
And the afternoon air, with a tender thrill,
Harked to the quail's complaining whistle, —

Ah me! should I paint the morrows again
In quite the colors so faint today,
And with the imperial mulberry's stain
Re-purple life's doublet of hodden-gray?

Know again the losses of disillusion?
For the sake of the hope, have the old deceit? —
In spite of the question's bitter infusion,
Don't you find these mulberries over-sweet?

All our atoms are changed, they say;
And the taste is so different since then:
We live, but a world has passed away,
With the years that perished to make us men.

◆

MARY HOWITT.

THE BROOM-FLOWER.

Oh, the broom, the yellow broom!
The ancient poet sung it,
And dear it is on summer days
To lie at rest among it.

I know the realms where people say
The flowers have not their fellow;
I know where they shine out like suns,
The crimson and the yellow.

I know where ladies live enchained
In luxury's silken fetters,
And flowers as bright as glittering gems
Are used for written letters.

But ne'er was flower so fair as this,
In modern days or olden;
It groweth on its nodding stem
Like to a garland golden.

And all about my mother's door
Shine out its glittering bushes,
And down the glen, where clear as light
The mountain-water gushes.

Take all the rest; but give me this,
And the bird that nestles in it;
I love it, for it loves the broom —
The green and yellow linnet.

Well, call the rose the queen of flowers,
And boast of that of Sharon,
Of lilies like to marble cups,
And the golden rod of Aaron;

I care not how these flowers may be
Beloved of man and woman;
The broom it is the flower for me,
That groweth on the common.

Oh, the broom, the yellow broom!
The ancient poet sung it,
And dear it is on summer days
To lie and rest among it.

TIBBIE INGLIS.

Bonnie Tibbie Inglis!
Through sun and stormy weather,
She kept upon the broomy hills
Her father's flock together.

Sixteen summers had she seen, —
A rosebud just unsealing;
Without sorrow, without fear,
In her mountain shealing.

She was made for happy thoughts,
For playful wit and laughter;
Singing on the hills alone,
With echo singing after.

She had hair as deeply black
As the cloud of thunder;
She had brows so beautiful,
And dark eyes flashing under.

Bright and witty shepherd girl,
Beside a mountain water,
I found her, whom a king himself
Would proudly call his daughter.

She was sitting 'mong the crags,
Wild and mossed and hoary,
Reading in an ancient book
Some old martyr story.

Tears were starting to her eyes,
Solemn thought was o'er her;
When she saw in that lone place
A stranger stand before her.

Crimson was her sunny cheek,
And her lips seemed moving
With the beatings of her heart; —
How could I help loving?

On a crag I sat me down.
Upon the mountain hoary,
And made her read again to me
That old pathetic story.

Then she sang me mountain songs,
Till the air was ringing
With her clear and warbling voice,
Like a skylark singing.

And when eve came on at length,
Among the blooming heather,
We herded on the mountain-side
Her father's flock together.

And near unto her father's house
I said "Good night!" with sorrow,
And inly wished that I might say,
"We'll meet again to-morrow."

I watched her tripping to her home;
I saw her meet her mother;
"Among a thousand maids," I cried,
"There is not such another!"

I wandered to my scholar's home,
It lonesome looked and dreary;
I took my books, but could not read,
Methought that I was weary.

I laid me down upon my bed,
My heart with sadness laden;
I dreamed but of the mountain world,
And of the mountain maiden.

I saw her of the ancient book
The pages turning slowly;
I saw her lovely crimson cheek
And dark eyes drooping lowly.

The dream was like the day's delight,
A life of pain's o'erpayment:
I rose, and with unwonted care,
Put on my Sabbath raiment.

To none I told my secret thoughts,
Not even to my mother,
Nor to the friend who, from my youth
Was dear as is a brother.

I got me to the hills again;
The little flock was feeding:
And there young Tibbie Inglis sat,
But not the old book reading.

She sat as if absorbing thought
With heavy spells had bound her,
As silent as the mossy crags
Upon the mountains round her.

I thought not of my Sabbath dress;
I thought not of my learning:
I thought but of the gentle maid
Who, I believed, was mourning.

Bonnie Tibbie Inglis!
How her beauty brightened
Looking at me, half-abashed,
With eyes that flamed and lightened!

There was no sorrow, then I saw,
There was no thought of sadness:
O life! what after-joy hast thou
Like love's first certain gladness?

I sat me down among the crags,
Upon the mountain hoary;
But read not then the ancient book,—
Love was our pleasant story.

And then she sang me songs again.
Old songs of love and sorrow;
For our sufficient happiness
Great charms from woe could borrow.

And many hours we talked in joy,
Yet too much blessed for laughter:
I was a happy man that day,
And happy ever after!

WILLIAM HOWITT.

DEPARTURE OF THE SWALLOW.

And is the swallow gone?
Who beheld it?
Which way sailed it?
Farewell bade it none?

No mortal saw it go:—
But who doth hear
Its summer cheer
As it flitteth to and fro?

So the freed spirit flies!
From its surrounding clay
It steals away
Like the swallow from the skies.

Whither? wherefore doth it go?
'Tis all unknown;
We feel alone
What a void is left below.

RALPH HOYT.

OLD.

By the wayside, on a mossy stone,
Sat a hoary pilgrim sadly musing;
Oft I marked him sitting there alone,
All the landscape like a page perusing;
Poor, unknown—
By the wayside, on a mossy stone.

Buckled knee and shoe, and broad-rimmed hat;
Coat as ancient as the form 'twas folding;
Silver buttons, queue, and crimpt cravat;
Oaken staff, his feeble hand upholding—
There he sat!
Buckled knee and shoe, and broad-rimmed hat.

Seemed it pitiful he should sit there,
No one sympathizing, no one heeding—
None to love him for his thin gray hair,
And the furrows all so mutely pleading
Age and care—
Seemed it pitiful he should sit there.

It was summer, and we went to school—
Dapper country lads, and little maidens;
Taught the motto of the "Dunce's stool,"
Its grave import still my fancy ladens—
"Here's a fool!"
It was summer, and we went to school.

When the stranger seemed to mark our play,
Some of us were joyous, some sad-hearted;
I remember well—too well that day!
Oftentimes the tears unbidden started,
Would not stay,
When the stranger seemed to mark our play.

One sweet spirit broke the silent spell—
Ah, to me her name was always heaven!
She besought him all his grief to tell,
(I was then thirteen, and she eleven,)—
Isabel!
One sweet spirit broke the silent spell.

"Angel," said he sadly, "I am old—
Earthly hope no longer hath a morrow;
Yet why I sit here thou shalt be told,"
Then his eye betrayed a pearl of sorrow;
Down it rolled.
"Angel," said he sadly, "I am old!

"I have tottered here to look once more
On the pleasant scene where I delighted
In the careless happy days of yore,
Ere the garden of my heart was blighted
To the core—
I have tottered here to look once more!

"All the picture now to me how dear!
E'en this gray old rock where I am seated
Is a jewel worth my journey here;
Ah, that such a scene must be completed
With a tear!
All the picture now to me how dear!

"Old stone school-house!—it is still the same!
There's the very step I so oft mounted;
There's the window creaking in its frame,
And the notches that I cut and counted
For the game;
Old stone school-house!—it is still the same!

"In the cottage yonder, I was born;
Long my happy home—that humble dwelling;
There the fields of clover, wheat, and corn—
There the spring, with limpid nectar swelling;
Ah, forlorn!
In the cottage yonder, I was born.

"Those two gateway sycamores you see
Then were planted just so far asunder
That long well-pole from the path to free,
And the wagon to pass safely under
Ninety-three!
Those two gateway sycamores you see.

"There's the orchard where we used to climb
When my mates and I were boys together —
Thinking nothing of the flight of time,
Fearing naught but work and rainy weather;
Past its prime!
There's the orchard where we used to climb!

"There the rude, three-cornered chestnut rails,
Round the pasture where the flocks were grazing,
Where, so sly, I used to watch for quails
In the crops of buckwheat we were raising —
Traps and trails;
There the rude, three-cornered chestnut rails.

"There's the mill that ground our yellow grain —
Pond, and river, still serenely flowing;
Cot, there nestling in the shaded lane
Where the lily of my heart was blowing —
Mary Jane!
There's the mill that ground our yellow grain!

"There's the gate on which I used to swing —
Brook, and bridge, and barn, and old red stable;
But alas! no more the morn shall bring
That dear group around my father's table —
Taken wing!
There's the gate on which I used to swing!

"I am fleeing — all I loved have fled.
Yon green meadow was our place for playing;
That old tree can tell of sweet things said
When around it Jane and I were straying —
She is dead!
I am fleeing — all I loved have fled.

"Yon white spire, a pencil on the sky,
Tracing silently life's changeful story,
So familiar to my dim old eye,
Points me to seven that are now in glory
There on high —
Yon white spire, a pencil on the sky!

"Oft the aisle of that old church we trod,
Guided thither by an angel mother;
Now she sleeps beneath its sacred sod;
Sire and sisters, and my little brother
Gone to God!
Oft the aisle of that old church we trod.

"There I heard of wisdom's pleasant ways —
Bless the holy lesson! — but, ah! never
Shall I hear again those songs of praise,
Those sweet voices — silent now forever!
Peaceful days!
There I heard of wisdom's pleasant ways.

"There my Mary blessed me with her hand
When our souls drank in the nuptial blessing,
Ere she hastened to the spirit-land —
Yonder turf her gentle bosom pressing;
Broken band!
There my Mary blessed me with her hand.

"I have come to see that grave once more,
And the sacred place where we delighted,

Where we worshipped, in the days of yore,
Ere the garden of my heart was blighted
To the core;
I have come to see that grave once more.

"Angel," said he sadly, "I am old —
Earthly hope no longer hath a morrow;
Now why I sit here thou hast been told,"
In his eye another pearl of sorrow;
Down it rolled!
"Angel," said he sadly, "I am old!

By the wayside, on a mossy stone,
Sat the hoary pilgrim sadly musing;
Still I marked him sitting there alone,
All the landscape like a page perusing —
Poor, unknown,
By the wayside, on a mossy stone.

LEIGH HUNT.

ABOU BEN ADHEM.

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
And, with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And, is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again, with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed, —
And, lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!

STANZAS FROM SONG OF THE FLOWERS.

We are the sweet flowers,
Born of sunny showers,
(Think, whene'er you see us what our beauty saith;)
Utterance, mute and bright,
Of some unknown delight,
We fill the air with pleasure by our simple breath:
All who see us love us —
We befit all places,
Unto sorrow we give smiles — and unto graces, graces.

Mark our ways, how noiseless
All, and sweetly voiceless,
Though the March winds pipe to make our passage clear;
Not a whisper tells
Where our small seed dwells
Nor is known the moment green when our tips appear.
We thread the earth in silence
In silence build our bowers —
And leaf by leaf in silence show, till we laugh a-top, sweet flowers!

See (and scorn all duller
Taste) how Heaven loves color;
How great Nature, clearly, joys in red and green;
What sweet thoughts she thinks
Of violets and pinks,
And a thousand flushing hues made solely to be seen:
See her whitest lilies
Chill the silver showers,
And what a red mouth is her rose, the woman of the flowers.

Uselessness divinest,
Of a use the finest,
Painteth us, the teachers of the end of use;
Travellers, weary-eyed,
Bless us, far and wide;
Unto sick and prisoned thoughts we give sudden truce:
Not a poor town window
Loves its sickliest planting,
But its wall speaks loftier truth than Babylonian vaunting.

Sagest yet the uses
Mixed with our sweet juices,
Whether man or May-fly profit of the balm;
As fair fingers healed
Knights from the olden field,
We hold cups of mightiest force to give the wildest calm.
Even the terror, poison,
Hath its plea for blooming;
Life it gives to reverent lips, though death to the presuming.

. . . .

Think of all these treasures,
Matchless works and pleasures
Every one a marvel, more than thought can say;
Then think in what bright showers
We thicken fields and bowers,
And with what heaps of sweetness half stifle wanton May:
Think of the mossy forests
By the bee-birds haunted,
And all those Amazonian plains lone lying as enchanted.

Trees themselves are ours:
Fruits are born of flowers;
Peach and roughest nut were blossoms in the spring;
The lusty bee knows well
The news, and comes pell-mell,
And dances in the gloomy thicks with darksome antheming;
Beneath the very burden
Of planet-pressing ocean,
We wash our smiling cheeks in peace —a thought for meek devotion.

. . . .

Who shall say that flowers
Dress not heaven's own bowers ?
Who its love, without us, can fancy— or sweet floor ?
Who shall even dare
To say we sprang not there —
And came not down, that Love might bring one piece of heaven the more ?
Oh! pray believe that angels
From those blue dominions
Brought us in their white laps down 'twixt their golden pinions.

THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET.

Green little vaulter in the sunny grass,
Catching your heart up at the feel of June, —
Sole voice that's heard amid the lazy noon,
When even the bees lag at the summoning brass;
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass!
O sweet and tiny cousins that belong,
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,

Both have your sunshine; both, though small, are strong
At your clear hearts; and both seem given to earth
To sing in thoughtful ears this natural song, —
In doors and out, summer and winter, mirth.

MAY AND THE POETS.

There is May in books forever;
May will part from Spenser never;
May's in Milton, May's in Prior,
May's in Chaucer, Thomson, Dyer;
May's in all the Italian books: —
She has old and modern nooks,
Where she sleeps with nymphs and elves,
In happy places they call shelves,
And will rise and dress your rooms
With a drapery thick with blooms.
Come, ye rains, then if ye will,
May's at home, and with me still;
But come rather, thou, good weather,
And find us in the fields together.

DEATH.

Death is a road our dearest friends have gone;
Why with such leaders, fear to say, "Lead on?"
Its gate repels, lest it too soon be tried,
But turns in balm on the immortal side.
Mothers have passed it: fathers, children; men
Whose like we look not to behold again;
Women that smiled away their loving breath;
Soft is the travelling on the road to death!
But guilt has passed it? men not fit to die?
Oh, hush — for He that made us all is by!
Human we're all — all men, all born of mothers;
All our own selves in the worn-out shape of others;
Our *used*, and oh, be sure, not to be *ill*-used brothers!

JEAN INGELOW.

SONGS OF SEVEN.

SEVEN TIMES ONE. — EXULTATION.

There's no dew left on the daisies and clover,
There's no rain left in heaven;
I've said my "seven times" over and over,
Seven times one are seven.

I am old, so old, I can write a letter;
My birthday lessons are done:
The lambs play always, they know no better;
They are only one times one.

O moon! in the night I have seen you sailing
And shining so round and low;
You were bright! ah, bright! but your light is failing, —
You are nothing now but a bow.

You moon, have you done something wrong in heaven
  That God has hidden your face?
I hope if you have, you will soon be forgiven,
  And shine again in your place.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow,
  You've powdered your legs with gold!
O brave marsh marybuds, rich and yellow,
  Give me your money to hold!

O columbine, open your folded wrapper,
  Where two twin turtle-doves dwell?
O cuckoopint, toll me the purple clapper
  That hangs in your clear green bell!

And show me your nest with the young ones in it;
  I will not steal them away;
I am old! you may trust me, linnet, linnet,—
  I am seven times one to-day.

SEVEN TIMES TWO. — ROMANCE.

You bells in the steeple, ring, ring out your changes,
  How many soever they be,
And let the brown meadow-lark's note as he ranges
  Come over, come over to me.

Yet birds' clearest carol by fall or by swelling
  No magical sense conveys,
And bells have forgotten their old art of telling
  The fortune of future days.

"Turn again, turn again," once they rang cheerily,
  While a boy listened alone;
Made his heart yearn again, musing so wearily
  All by himself on a stone.

Poor bells! I forgive you; your good days are over,
  And mine, they are yet to be;
No listening, no longing shall aught, aught discover
  You leave the story to me.

The foxglove shoots out of the green matted heather
  Preparing her hoods of snow;
She was idle, and slept till the sunshiny weather:
  Oh! children take long to grow.

I wish and I wish that the spring would go faster,
  Nor long summer bide so late;
And I could grow on like the foxglove and aster,
  For some things are ill to wait.

I wait for the day when dear hearts shall discover,
  While dear hands are laid on my head;
"The child is a woman, the book may close over,
  For all the lessons are said."

I wait for my story,—the birds cannot sing it,
Not one, as he sits on the tree;
The bells cannot ring it, but long years, oh, bring it!
Such as I wish it to be.

SEVEN TIMES THREE. — LOVE.

I leaned out of window, I smelt the white clover,
Dark, dark was the garden, I saw not the gate;
"Now, if there be footsteps, he comes, my one lover,—
Hush, nightingale, hush! O sweet nightingale, wait
Till I listen and hear
If a step draweth near,
For my love he is late!

"The skies in the darkness stoop nearer and nearer,
A cluster of stars hangs like fruit in the tree,
The fall of the water comes sweeter, comes clearer:
To what art thou listening, and what dost thou see?
Let the star-clusters grow,
Let the sweet waters flow,
And cross quickly to me.

"You night-moths that hover where honey brims over
From sycamore blossoms, or settle or sleep;
You glowworms, shine out, and the pathway discover
To him that comes darkling along the rough steep.
Ah, my sailor, make haste,
For the time runs to waste,
And my love lieth deep,—

"Too deep for swift telling; and yet, my one lover,
I've conned thee an answer, it waits thee to-night."
By the sycamore passed he, and through the white clover,
Then all the sweet speech I had fashioned took flight;
But I'll love him more, more
Than e'er wife loved before,
Be the days dark or bright.

SEVEN TIMES FOUR. — MATERNITY.

Heigh-ho! daisies and buttercups!
Fair yellow daffodils, stately and tall!
When the wind wakes how they rock in the grasses,
And dance with the cuckoo-buds slender and small!
Here's two bonny boys, and here's mother's own lasses,
Eager to gather them all.

Heigh-ho! daisies and buttercups;
Mother shall thread them a daisy chain;
Sing them a song of the pretty hedge-sparrow,
That loved her brown little ones, loved them full fain;
Sing, "Heart, thou art wide though the house be but narrow,"—
Sing once, and sing it again.

Heigh-ho! daisies and buttercups!
Sweet wagging cowslips, they bend and they bow;
A ship sails afar over warm ocean waters,
And haply one musing doth stand at her prow.
O bonny brown sons, and O sweet little daughters,
Maybe he thinks of you now.

Heigh-ho! daisies and buttercups!
Fair yellow daffodils, stately and tall!
A sunshiny world full of laughter and leisure,
And fresh hearts unconscious of sorrow and thrall!
Send down on their pleasure smiles passing its measure,
God that is over us all!

SEVEN TIMES FIVE. — WIDOWHOOD.

I sleep and rest, my heart makes moan
Before I am well awake;
"Let me bleed! O let me alone,
Since I must not break!"

For children wake, though fathers sleep
With a stone at foot and at head:
O sleepless God, forever keep,
Keep both living and dead!

I lift mine eyes, and what to see
But a world happy and fair!
I have not wished it to mourn with me,—
Comfort is not there.

Oh, what anear but golden brooms,
But a waste of reedy rills!
Oh, what afar but the fine glooms
On the rare blue hills!

I shall not die, but live forlore,—
How bitter it is to part!
Oh, to meet thee, my love, once more!
O my heart, my heart!

No more to hear, no more to see!
Oh, that an echo might wake
And waft one note of thy psalm to me
Ere my heart-strings break!

I should know it how faint soe'er,
And with angel voices blent;
Oh, once to feel thy spirit anear;
I could be content!

Or once between the gates of gold,
While an entering angel trod,
But once,—thee sitting to behold
On the hills of God!

SEVEN TIMES SIX. — GIVING IN MARRIAGE.

To bear, to nurse, to rear,
To watch, and then to lose:
To see my bright ones disappear,
Drawn up like morning dews,—
To bear, to nurse, to rear,
To watch, and then to lose:
This have I done when God drew near
Among his own to choose.

To hear, to heed, to wed,
And with thy lord depart
In tears that he, as soon as shed,
Will let no longer smart,—
To hear, to heed, to wed,
This while thou didst I smiled,
For now it was not God who said,
"Mother, give ME thy child."

O fond, O fool, and blind!
To God I gave with tears;
But when a man like grace would find,
My soul put by her fears,—
O fond, O fool, and blind!
God guards in happier spheres;
That man will guard where he did bind
Is hope for unknown years.

To hear, to heed, to wed,
Fair lot that maidens choose,
Thy mother's tenderest words are said,
Thy face no more she views;
Thy mother's lot, my dear,
She doth in naught accuse;
Her lot to bear, to nurse, to rear,
To love,—and then to lose.

SEVEN TIMES SEVEN. — LONGING FOR HOME.

A song of a boat: —
There was once a boat on a billow:
Lightly she rocked to her port remote,
And the foam was white in her wake like snow,
And her frail mast bowed when the breeze would blow,
And bent like a wand of willow.

I shaded mine eyes one day when a boat
Went curtsying over the billow,
I marked her course till a dancing mote,
She faded out on the moonlit foam,
And I stayed behind in the dear-loved home;
And my thoughts all day were about the boat,
And my dreams upon the pillow.

I pray you hear my song of a boat
  For it is but short:—
My boat you shall find none fairer afloat,
  In river or port.
Long I looked out for the lad she bore,
  On the open desolate sea,
And I think he sailed to the heavenly shore,
  For he came not back to me—
      Ah me!

    A song of a nest:—
  There was once a nest in a hollow:
Down in the mosses and knot-grass pressed,
Soft and warm and full to the brim—
Vetches leaned over it purple and dim,
  With buttercup buds to follow.

I pray you hear my song of a nest,
  For it is not long:—
You shall never light in a summer quest
  The bushes among—
Shall never light on a prouder sitter,
  A fairer nestful, nor ever know
A softer sound than their tender twitter,
  That wind-like did come and go.

I had a nestful once of my own,
  Ah, happy, happy I!
Right dearly I loved them; but when they were grown
  They spread out their wings to fly—
Oh, one after one they flew away
  Far up to the heavenly blue,
To the better country, the upper day,
  And—I wish I was going too.

I pray you what is the nest to me,
  My empty nest?
And what is the shore where I stood to see
  My boat sail down to the west?
Can I call that home where I anchor yet,
Though my good man has sailed?
Can I call that home where my nest was set,
  Now all its hope hath failed?

Nay, but the port where my sailor went,
  And the land where my nestlings be:
There is the home where my thoughts are sent,
  The only home for me—
      Ah me!

LIKE A LAVEROCK IN THE LIFT.

It's we two, it's we two, it's we two for aye,
All the world and we two, and Heaven be our stay.
Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride!
All the world was Adam once, with Eve by his side.

What's the world, my lass, my love!—what can it do?
I am thine, and thou art mine; life is sweet and new.
If the world have missed the mark, let it stand by,
For we two have gotten leave, and once more we'll try.

Like a laverock in the lift, sing, O bonny bride!
It's we two, it's we two, happy side by side.
Take a kiss from me, thy man, now the song begins:
"All is made afresh for us, and the brave heart wins."

When the darker days come, and no sun will shine,
Thou shalt dry my tears, lass, and I'll dry thine.
It's we two, it's we two, while the world's away,
Sitting by the golden sheaves on our wedding-day.

THE LONG WHITE SEAM.

As I came round the harbor buoy,
The lights began to gleam.
No wave the land-locked water stirred,
The crags were white as cream;
And I marked my love by candle-light
Sewing her long white seam.
It's aye sewing ashore, my dear,
Watch and steer at sea,
It's reef and furl, and haul the line,
Set sail and think of thee.

I climbed to reach her cottage door;
Oh, sweetly my love sings!
Like a shaft of light her voice breaks forth,
My soul to meet it springs,
As the shining water leaped of old,
When stirred by angel wings.
Aye longing to list anew,
Awake and in my dream,
But never a song she sang like this,
Sewing her long white seam.

Fair fall the lights, the harbor lights,
That brought me in to thee,
And peace drop down on that low roof
For the sight that I did see,
And the voice, my dear, that rang so clear
All for the love of me.
For oh, for oh, with brows bent low
By the candle's flickering gleam,
Her wedding-gown it was she wrought,
Sewing the long white seam.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[*From Vanity of Human Wishes.*]

ENVIABLE AGE.

But grant, the virtues of a temperate prime,
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime;
An age that melts with unperceived decay,
And glides in modest innocence away;
Whose peaceful day, benevolence endears,
Whose night congratulating conscience cheers;
The general favorite as the general friend:
Such age there is, and who shall wish its end?

[*From Vanity of Human Wishes.*]

WISDOM'S PRAYER.

Where then shall Hope and Fear their objects find?
Must dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise;
No cries invoke the mercies of the skies?
Inquirer, cease; petitions yet remain,
Which Heaven may hear, nor deem religion vain.
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to Heaven the measure and the choice,
Safe in His power, whose eyes discern afar
The secret ambush of a specious prayer;
Implore His aid, in His decisions rest,
Secure whate'er He gives, He gives the best.
Yet, when the sense of sacred presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
Pour forth thy fervors for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resigned:
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, that, panting for a happier seat,
Counts death, kind Nature's signal of retreat:
These goods for man the laws of Heaven ordain,
These goods He grants, who grants the power to gain;
With these celestial Wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.

[*From Vanity of Human Wishes.*]

CHARLES XII.

On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes, let Swedish Charles decide:
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labors tire;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquered lord of pleasure and of pain.
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their powers combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign;
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
"Think nothing gained," he cries, "till naught remain,

On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky."
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended, wait;
Stern Famine guards the solitary coast
And Winter barricades the realms of frost;
He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay;
Hide, blushing glory, hide Pultowa's day!
The vanquished hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands;
Condemned a needy suppliant to wait,
While ladies interpose and slaves debate.
But did not Chance at length her error mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his end?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound,
Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
His fall was destined to a barren strand,
A petty fortress and a dubious hand;
He left a name at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral or adorn a tale.

[*From London.*]

THE FATE OF POVERTY.

By numbers here from shame or censure free,
All crimes are safe but hated poverty.
This, only this, the rigid law pursues,
This, only this, provokes the snarling muse.
The sober trader at a tattered cloak
Wakes from his dream, and labors for a joke;
With brisker air the silken courtiers gaze,
And turn the varied taunt a thousand ways.
Of all the griefs that harass the distressed,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest;
Fate never wounds more deep the generous heart,
Than when a blockhead's insult points the dart.
Has Heaven reserved, in pity to the poor,
No pathless waste, or undiscovered shore?
No secret island in the boundless main?
No peaceful desert yet unclaimed by Spain?
Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,
And bear Oppression's insolence no more.
This mournful truth is everywhere confessed,
SLOW RISES WORTH, BY POVERTY DEPRESSED.

BEN JONSON.

TO CELIA.

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
  And I will pledge with mine:
Or leave a kiss but in the cup
  And I'll not look for wine.
The thirst that from the soul doth rise
  Doth ask a drink divine;
But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
  I would not change for thine.

I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
  Not so much honoring thee
As giving it a hope that there
  It could not withered be;
But thou thereon didst only breathe
  And sent'st it back to me;
Since when it grows, and smells, I swear,
  Not of itself but thee!

HYMN TO CYNTHIA.

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
  Now the sun is laid to sleep,
Seated in thy silver chair,
  State in wonted manner keep:
Hesperus entreats thy light,
Goddess, excellently bright!

Earth, let not thy envious shade
  Dare itself to interpose:
Cynthia's shining orb was made
  Heaven to clear when day did close:
Bless us then with wishèd sight,
Goddess, excellently bright!

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
  And thy crystal shining quiver:
Give unto the flying hart
  Space to breathe, how short soever;
Thou that mak'st a day of night,
Goddess, excellently bright!

THE SWEET NEGLECT.

Still to be neat, still to be drest,
As you were going to a feast:
Still to be powdered, still perfumed:
Lady, it is to be presumed,
Though art's hid causes are not found,
All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face,
That makes simplicity a grace;
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free:
Such sweet neglect more taketh me,
Than all the adulteries of art,
That strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

EPITAPH.

Would'st thou hear what man can say
In a little? — reader, stay!
Underneath this stone doth lie
As much beauty as could die,—
Which in life did harbor give
To more virtue than doth live.
If at all she had a fault,
Leave it buried in this vault.
One name was Elizabeth,—
The other, let it sleep with death.
Fitter where it died to tell,
Than that it lived at all. Farewell!

GOOD LIFE, LONG LIFE.

  It is not growing like a tree
  In bulk, doth make man better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year.
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere:
    A lily of a day
    Is fairer far in May,
  Although it fall and die that night,
  It was the plant and flower of light.
In small proportions, we just beauties see;
And in short measures, life may perfect be.

JOHN KEATS.

THE TERROR OF DEATH.

When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain,
Before high-pilèd books, in charactery
Hold like rich garners the full-ripenèd grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
Huge, cloudy symbols of a high romance,
And think that I may never live to trace
Their shadows, with the magic hand of Chance;

And when I feel, fair creature of an hour!
That I shall never look upon thee more,
Never have relish in the fairy power
Of unreflecting love,—then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

SONNET COMPOSED ON LEAVING ENGLAND.

Bright Star! would I were steadfast as thou art,—
Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient sleepless eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution, round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors:—
No,—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest;
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever,—or else swoon to death.

ODE ON THE POETS.

Bards of passion and of mirth
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Have ye souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new?
Yes, and those of heaven commune
With the spheres of sun and moon;
With the noise of fountains wonderous
And the parle of voices thunderous;
With the whisper of heaven's trees
And one another, in soft ease
Seated on Elysian lawns
Browsed by none but Dian's fawns;
Underneath large bluebells tented,
Where the daisies are rose-scented,
And the rose herself has got
Perfume which on earth is not;
Where the nightingale doth sing
Not a senseless, trancèd thing,
But divine melodious truth;
Philosophic numbers smooth;
Tales and golden histories
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then
On the earth ye live again;
And the souls ye left behind you
Teach us, here, the way to find you
Where your other souls are joying,
Never slumbered, never cloying.
Here, your earth-born souls still speak
To mortals, of their little week;
Of their sorrows and delights;
Of their passions and their spites;
Of their glory and their shame;
What doth strengthen and what maim:—
Thus ye teach us, every day,
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of passion and of mirth
Ye have left your souls on earth!
Ye have souls in heaven too,
Double-lived in regions new!

FANCY.

Ever let the fancy roam;
Pleasure never is at home;
At a touch sweet pleasure melteth
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth;
Then let wingèd fancy wander
Through the thought still spread beyond her;
Open wide the mind's cage-door,—
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.
O sweet fancy! let her loose!
Summer's joys are spoilt by use,
And the enjoying of the spring
Fades as does its blossoming.
Autumn's red-lipped fruitage too,
Blushing through the mist and dew,

Cloys with tasting. What do then?
Sit thee by the ingle, when
The sear faggot blazes bright,
Spirit of a winter's night;
When the soundless earth is muffled,
And the cakèd snow is shuffled
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;
When the Night doth meet the Noon
In a dark conspiracy
To banish Even from her sky.
Sit thee there, and send abroad,
With a mind self-overawed,
Fancy, high-commissioned : — send her.
She has vassals to attend her;
She will bring, in spite of frost,
Beauties that the earth hath lost;
She will bring thee, all together,
All delights of summer weather;
All the buds and bells of May,
From dewy sward or thorny spray;
All the heapèd autumn's wealth;
With a still, mysterious stealth;
She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it,—thou shalt hear
Distant harvest-carols clear,—
Rustle of the reapèd corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn;
And, in the same moment,—hark!
'Tis the early April lark,—
Or the rooks, with busy caw,
Foraging for sticks and straw.
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold
The daisy and the marigold;
White-plumed lilies, and the first
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst;
Shaded hyacinth, alway
Sapphire queen of the mid-May;
And every leaf, and every flower
Pearlèd with the self-same shower.
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep
Meagre from its cellèd sleep;
And the snake, all winter-thin,
Cast on sunny bank its skin;
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest
Quiet on her mossy nest;
Then the hurry and alarm
When the bee-hive casts its swarm;
Acorns ripe down-pattering
While the autumn breezes sing.

[*From Endymion.*]

BEAUTY'S IMMORTALITY.

A THING of beauty is a joy forever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils
With the green world they live in; and clear rills
That for themselves a cooling covert make
'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake,
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms
We have imagined for the mighty dead;
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
  My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,

Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thy happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

Oh, for a draught of vintage, that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country-green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
Oh, for a beaker full of the warm South!
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim!

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry fays:
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain,—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when sick for home
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep?

ON READING CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

Much have I travelled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne:
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific,—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise,—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

JOHN KEBLE.

WHERE IS THY FAVORED HAUNT?

Where is thy favored haunt, eternal voice,
The region of thy choice,
Where undisturbed by sin and earth, the soul
Owns thy entire control?
'Tis on the mountain's summit dark and high,
When storms are hurrying by:
'Tis 'mid the strong foundations of the earth,
Where torrents have their birth.
No sounds of worldly toil ascending there,
Mar the full burst of prayer;
Lone Nature feels that she may freely breathe,
And round us and beneath
Are heard her sacred tones: the fitful sweep
Of winds across the steep,
Through withered bents — romantic note and clear,
Meet for a hermit's ear,—

The wheeling kite's wild solitary cry,
And scarcely heard so high,
The dashing waters when the air is still,
From many a torrent rill
That winds unseen beneath the shaggy fell.
Tracked by the blue mist well:
Such sounds as make deep silence in the heart,
For Thought to do her part.

'Tis then we hear the voice of God within,
Pleading with care and sin;
"Child of my love! how have I wearied thee?
Why wilt thou err from me?
Have I not brought thee from the house of slaves;
Parted the drowning waves,
And sent my saints before thee in the way,
Lest thou should'st faint or stray?

"What was the promise made to thee alone?
Art thou the excepted one?
An heir of glory without grief or pain?
O vision false and vain!
There lies thy cross; beneath it meekly bow,
It fits thy stature now:
Who scornful pass it with averted eye,
'Twill crush them by and by.

"Raise thy repining eyes, and take true measure
Of thine eternal treasure;
The father of thy Lord can grudge thee nought,
The world for thee was bought,
And as this landscape broad — earth, sea, and sky,—
All centres in thine eye,
So all God does if rightly understood,
Shall work thy final good."

WHY SHOULD WE FAINT AND FEAR TO LIVE ALONE?

Why should we faint and fear to live alone,
Since all alone, so heaven has willed, we die?
Not even the tenderest heart, and next our own,
Knows half the reasons why we smile and sigh.

Each in his hidden sphere of joy or woe
Our hermit spirits dwell, and range apart,
Our eyes see all around in gloom or glow —
Hues of their own, fresh borrowed from the heart.

And well it is for us our God should feel
Alone our secret throbbings: so our prayer
May readier spring to heaven, nor spend its zeal
On cloud-born idols of this lower air.

For if one heart in perfect sympathy
Beat with another, answering love for love,
Weak mortals all entranced on earth would lie;
Nor listen for those purer strains above.

Or what if heaven for once its searching light
Lent to some partial eye, disclosing all
The rude bad thoughts, that in our bosom's night
Wander at large, nor heed Love's gentle thrall?

Who would not shun the dreary uncouth place?
As if, fond leaning where her infant slept,
A mother's arm a serpent should embrace:
So might we friendless live, and die unwept.

Then keep the softening veil in mercy drawn,
Thou who canst love us, though thou read us true,
As on the bosom of the aerial lawn
Melts in dim haze each coarse ungentle hue.

So too may soothing hope thy leave enjoy
Sweet visions of long severed hearts to frame:
Though absence may impair, or cares annoy,
Some constant mind may draw us still the same.

SINCE ALL THAT IS NOT HEAVEN MUST FADE.

Since all that is not heaven must fade,
Light be the hand of ruin laid
Upon the home I love:
With lulling spell let soft decay
Steal on, and spare the giant sway,
The crash of tower and grove.

Far opening down some woodland deep
In their own quiet dale should sleep
The relics dear to thought,
And wild-flower wreaths from side to side
Their waving tracery hang, to hide
What ruthless time has wrought.

Such are the visions green and sweet
That o'er the wistful fancy fleet
In Asia's sea-like plain,
Where slowly, round his isles of sand,
Euphrates through the lonely land
Winds toward the pearly main.

Slumber is there, but not of rest;
There her forlorn and weary nest
The famished hawk has found,
The wild dog howls at fall of night,
The serpent's rustling coils affright
The traveller on his round.

What shapeless form, half lost on high,
Half seen against the evening sky,
Seems like a ghost to glide,
And watch from Babel's crumbling heap,
Where in her shadow, fast asleep,
Lies fallen imperial pride?

With half-closed eye a lion there
Is basking in his noontide lair
Or prowls in twilight gloom.
The golden city's king he seems,
Such as in old prophetic dreams
Sprang from rough ocean's womb.

But where are now his eagle wings,
That sheltered erst a thousand kings,
Hiding the glorious sky
From half the nations, till they own
No holier name, no mightier throne?
That vision is gone by.

Quenched is the golden statue's ray,
The breath of heaven has blown away
What toiling earth had piled,
Scattering wise heart and crafty hand,
As breezes strew on ocean's sand,
The fabrics of a child.

Divided thence through every age
Thy rebels, Lord, their warfare wage,
And hoarse and jarring all
Mount up their heaven-assailing cries
To thy bright watchman in the skies
From Babel's shattered wall.

Thrice only since, with blended might
The nations on that haughty height
Have met to scale the heaven:
Thrice only might a seraph's look
A moment's shade of sadness brook;
Such power to guilt was given.

Now the fierce Bear and Leopard keen
Are perished as they ne'er had been,
Oblivion is their home:
Ambition's boldest dream and last
Must melt before the clarion blast
That sounds the dirge of Rome.

Heroes and kings, obey the charm,
Withdraw the proud high-reaching arm;
There is an oath on high,
That ne'er on brow of mortal birth
Shall blend again the crowns of earth,
Nor in according cry

Her many voices mingling own
One tyrant lord, one idol throne:
But to His triumph soon
He shall descend who rules above,
And the pure language of his love
All tongues of men shall tune.

Nor let ambition heartless mourn;
When Babel's very ruins burn,
Her high desires may breathe;—
O'ercome thyself, and thou may'st share
With Christ his Father's throne, and wear
The world's imperial wreath.

FRANCES ANNE KEMBLE.

ABSENCE.

What shall I do with all the days and hours
That must be counted ere I see thy face?
How shall I charm the interval that lowers
Between this time and that sweet time of grace?

Shall I in slumber steep each weary sense —
Weary with longing? Shall I flee away
Into past days, and with some fond pretence
Cheat myself to forget the present day?

Shall love for thee lay on my soul the sin
Of casting from me God's great gift of time?
Shall I, these mists of memory locked within,
Leave and forget life's purposes sublime?

Oh, how, or by what means, may I contrive
To bring the hour that brings thee back more near?
How may I teach my drooping hopes to live
Until that blessed time, and thou art here?

I'll tell thee; for thy sake I will lay hold
Of all good aims, and consecrate to thee,
In worthy deeds, each moment that is told
While thou, beloved one! art far from me.

For thee I will arouse my thoughts to try
All heavenward flights, all high and holy strains;
For thy dear sake I will walk patiently
Through these long hours, nor call their minutes pains.

I will this dreary blank of absence make
A noble task-time; and will therein strive
To follow excellence, and to o'ertake
More good than I have won since yet I live.

So may this doomèd time build up in me
A thousand graces, which shall thus be thine;
So may my love and longing hallowed be,
And thy dear thought an influence divine.

FAITH.

BETTER trust all and be deceived,
And weep that trust and that deceiving,
Than doubt one heart, that if believed
Had blessed one's life with true believing.

Oh, in this mocking world too fast
The doubting fiend o'ertakes our youth:
Better be cheated to the last
Than lose the blessed hope of truth.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY.

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER.

OH! say, can you see by the dawn's early light
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,—
Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming!
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
Oh! say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On that shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected, now shines on the stream;
'Tis the star-spangled banner; oh, long may it wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave;
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

Oh! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with victory and peace, may the heaven-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just;
And this be our motto,—"In God is our trust,"—
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

HARRIET McEWEN KIMBALL.

GOOD NEWS.

A BEE flew in at my window,
And circled around my head;
He came like a herald of summer-time.
And what do you think he said?

"As sure as the roses shall blossom" —
These are the words he said,—
"As sure as the gardens shall laugh in pride,
And the meadows blush clover-red;

"As sure as the golden robin
Shall build her a swinging nest,
And the captured sunbeam lie fast-locked
In the marigold's burning breast;

"As sure as the water-lilies
Shall float like a fairy fleet;
As sure as the torrent shall leap the rocks
With foamy, fantastic feet;

"As sure as the bobolink's carol
And the plaint of the whippoorwill
Shall gladden the morning, and sadden the night,
And the crickets pipe loud and shrill;

"So sure to the heart of the maiden
Who hath loved and sorrowed long,
Glad tidings shall bring the summer of joy
With bursting of blossom and song!"

A seer as well as a herald!
For while I sat weeping to-day,
The tenderest, cheeriest letter came
From Lionel far away.

Good news! O little bee-prophet,
Your words I will never forget!
It may be foolish,—that dear, old sign,—
But Lionel's true to me yet!

TROUBLE TO LEND.

TO-MORROW has trouble to lend
To all who lack to-day;
Go, borrow it, — borrow, griefless heart,
And thou with thy peace wilt pay!

To-morrow has trouble to lend,—
An endless, endless store;
But I have as much as heart can hold,—
Why should I borrow more!

HELIOTROPE.

SWEETEST, sweetest, Heliotrope!
In the sunset's dying splendor.
In the trance of twilight tender,
All my senses I surrender,
To the subtle spells that bind me:
The dim air swimmeth in my sight
With visions vague of soft delight;
Shadowy hands with endless chain
Of purple-clustered bloom enwind me; —
Garlands drenched in dreamy rain
Of perfume passionate as sorrow
And sad as Love's to-morrow!
Bewildering music fills mine ears,—
Faint laughter and commingling tears,—
Flowing like delicious pain
Through my drowsy brain.
Bosomed in the blissful gloom,—
Meseems I sink on slumberous slope
Buried deep in purple bloom,
Sweetest, sweetest Heliotrope!
Undulates the earth beneath me;
Still the shadow-hands enwreath me,
And clouds of faces half defined,
Lovely and fantastical,
Sweet, — O sweet! — and strange withal,
Sweeping like a desert wind
Across my vision leave me blind!
Subtler grows the spell and stronger;

What enchantments weird possess me,—
Now uplift me, now oppress me?
Do I feast, or do I hunger?
Is it bliss, or is it anguish?
Is it Auster's treacherous breath
Kissing me with honeyed death,
While I sicken, droop, and languish?

Still I feel my blood's dull beat
In my head and hands and feet;
Struggling faintly with thy sweetness,
Heliotrope! Heliotrope!
Give me back my strength's completeness.
Must I pine and languish ever!
Wilt thou loose my senses never!
Wilt thou bloom and bloom for ever,
Oh, Lethean Heliotrope?

. . . . .

Ah, the night-wind, freshly blowing,
Sets the languid blood a-flowing!
I revive!—
I escape thy spells alive!

. . . . .

Flower! I love and do not love thee!
Hold my breath, but bend above thee;
Crush thy buds, yet bid them ope;
Sweetest, sweetest Heliotrope!

DAY-DREAMING.

How better am I
Than a butterfly?
Here, as the noiseless hours go by,
Hour by hour,
I cling to my fancy's half-blown flower:
Over its sweetness I brood and brood,
And scarcely stir, though sounds intrude
That would trouble and fret another mood
Less divine
Than mine!
Who cares for the bees?
I will take my ease,
Dream and dream as long as I please;
Hour by hour,
With love-wings fanning my sweet, sweet flower!
Gather your honey, and hoard your gold,
Through spring and summer, and hive through cold!
I will cling to my flower till it is mould,
Breathe one sigh
And die!

THE LAST APPEAL.

The room is swept and garnished for thy sake;
The table spread with Love's most liberal cheer;
The fire is blazing brightly on the hearth;
Faith lingers yet to give thee welcome here.
When wilt thou come?

Daily I weave the airy web of hope;
Frail as the spider's, wrought with beads of dew,—
That, like Penelope's, each night undone,
Each morn in patience I begin anew.
When wilt thou come?

Not yet! To-morrow Faith will take her flight,
The fire die out, the banquet disappear;
Forever will these fingers drop the web,
And only desolation wait thee here.
Oh, come to-day!

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

A FAREWELL.

My fairest child, I have no song to give you,
No lark could pipe to skies so dull and gray;
Yet, ere we part, one lesson I can leave you
For every day: —

Be good, my dear, and let who will, be clever;
Do noble things, not dream them, all day long;
And so make life, death, and the vast forever
One grand, sweet song.

THE THREE FISHERS.

Three fishers went sailing away to the West —
Away to the West as the sun went down;
Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,
And the children stood watching them out of the town;
For men must work, and women must weep;
And there's little to earn and many to keep,
Though the harbor-bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower
And trimmed the lamps as the sun went down;
They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower,
And the night-rack came rolling up, ragged and brown.
But men must work and women must weep,
Though storms be sudden and waters deep,
And the harbor-bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands
In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
And the women are weeping and wringing their hands,
For those who will never come back to the town;
For men must work, and women must weep —
And the sooner it's over, the sooner to sleep —
And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.

DOLCINO TO MARGARET.

The world goes up and the world goes down,
And the sunshine follows the rain;
And yesterday's sneer and yesterday's frown
Can never come over again,
Sweet wife;
No, never come over again.

For woman is warm, though man be cold,
And the night will hallow the day;
Till the heart which at eve was weary and old
Can rise in the morning gay,
Sweet wife;
To its work in the morning gay.

SANDS OF DEE.

"O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands of Dee!"
The western wind was wild and dank with foam
And all alone went she.

The western tide crept up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.
The rolling mist came down and hid the land
And never home came she.

'Oh is it weed, or fish, or floating hair —
A tress of golden hair,
A drownèd maiden's hair —
Above the nets at sea?
Was never salmon yet that shone so fair,
Among the stakes on Dee."

They rowed her in across the rolling foam —
The cruel, crawling foam,
The cruel, hungry foam —
To her grave beside the sea;
But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee.

WILLIAM KNOX.

OH! WHY SHOULD THE SPIRIT OF MORTAL BE PROUD?

Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
He passeth from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around, and together be laid;
As the young and the old, the low and the high,
Shall crumble to dust and together shall lie.

The infant, a mother attended and loved,
The mother, that infant's affection who proved,
The father, that mother and infant who blest,
Each, all, are away to that dwelling of rest.

The maid, on whose brow, on whose cheek, in whose eye,
Shone beauty and pleasure, — her triumphs are by;
And alike from the minds of the living erased
Are the memories of mortals who loved her and praised.

The head of the king, that the sceptre hath borne;
The brow of the priest, that the mitre hath worn;
The eye of the sage, and the heart of the brave, —
Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

The peasant, whose lot was to sow and to reap;
The herdsman, who climbed with his goats up the steep;
The beggar, who wandered in search of his bread, —
Have faded away like the grass that we tread.

So the multitude goes, like the flower or weed,
That withers away to let others succeed;
So the multitude comes, even those we behold,
To repeat every tale that has often been told.

For we are the same that our fathers have been;
We see the same sights that our fathers have seen:
We drink the same stream, and we feel the same sun.
And run the same course that our fathers have run.

The thoughts we are thinking our fathers did think;
From the death we are shrinking our fathers did shrink;
To the life we are clinging our fathers did cling,
But it speeds from us all like the bird on the wing.

They loved, — but the story we cannot unfold;
They scorned, — but the heart of the haughty is cold;
They grieved, — but no wail from their slumbers will come;
They joyed, — but the tongue of their gladness is dumb.

They died, — ah! they died; — we. things that are now,
That walk on the turf that lies over their brow,
And make in their dwelling a transient abode,
Meet the things that they met on their pilgrimage road.

Yea, hope and despondency, pleasure and pain,
Are mingled together in sunshine and rain:
And the smile and the tear, and the song and the dirge,
Still follow each other like surge upon surge.

'Tis the wink of an eye; 'tis the draught of a breath
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud;
Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

MARIE R. LACOSTE.

SOMEBODY'S DARLING.

INTO a ward of the whitewashed walls,
Where the dead and dying lay,
Wounded by bayonets, shells, and balls,
Somebody's darling was borne one day —
Somebody's darling, so young, and so brave,
Wearing yet on his pale sweet face,
Soon to be hid by the dust of the grave,
The lingering light of his boyhood's grace.

Matted and damp are the curls of gold,
Kissing the snow of that fair young brow;
Pale are the lips of delicate mould —
Somebody's darling is dying now.
Back from his beautiful, blue-veined brow,
Brush all the wandering waves of gold.
Cross his hands on his bosom now,
Somebody's darling is still and cold.

Kiss him once for somebody's sake,
Murmur a prayer soft and low;
One bright curl from its fair mates take,
They were somebody's pride, you know:
Somebody's hand has rested there,—
Was it a mother's soft and white?
And have the lips of a sister fair
Been baptized in those waves of light?

God knows best — he was somebody's love;
Somebody's heart enshrined him there;
Somebody wafted his name above
Night and morn on the wings of prayer.
Somebody wept when he marched away
Looking so handsome, brave, and grand;
Somebody's kiss on his forehead lay,
Somebody clung to his parting hand.
Somebody's waiting and watching for him —
Yearning to hold him again to the heart;
And there he lies with his blue eyes dim,
And the smiling, childlike lips apart.
Tenderly bury the fair young dead,
Pausing to drop on his grave a tear;
Carve on the wooden slab at his head,—
"Somebody's darling slumbers here."

ALBERT LAIGHTON.

UNDER THE LEAVES.

Oft have I walked these woodland paths,
Without the blest foreknowing
That underneath the withered leaves
The fairest buds were growing.

To-day the south-wind sweeps away
The types of autumn's splendor,
And shows the sweet arbutus flowers,
Spring's children, pure and tender.

O prophet-flowers! — with lips of bloom,
Outvying in your beauty
The pearly tints of ocean shells,—
Ye teach me faith and duty!

"Walk life's dark ways," ye seem to say,
"With love's divine foreknowing,
That where man sees but withered leaves,
God sees sweet flowers growing."

BY THE DEAD.

Sweet winter roses, stainless as the snow,
As was thy life, O tender heart and true!
A cross of lilies that our tears bedew,
A garland of the fairest flowers that grow,
And filled with fragrance as the thought of thee,
We lay, with loving hand, upon thy breast,
Wrapt in the calm of Death's great mystery;
Ours still to feel the pain, the unlanguaged woe,
The bitter sense of loss, the vague unrest,
And wear unseen the cypress-leaf and rue,
Thinking, the while, of lovelier flowers that blow
In everlasting gardens of the blest,
That wither not like these, and never shed
Their rare and heavenly odors for the dead.

CHARLES LAMB.

OLD FAMILIAR FACES.

I HAVE had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a love once, fairest among women;
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man;
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly —
Left him to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood.
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces —

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed,
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces!

HESTER.

WHEN maidens such as Hester die,
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try,
With vain endeavor.

A month or more has she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate,
That flushed her spirit:

I know not by what name beside
I shall it call; — if 't was not pride,
It was a joy to that allied,
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feelings cool;
But she was trained in nature's school,
Nature had blessed her.

A waking eye, a prying mind,
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind;
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind, —
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbor, gone before
To that unknown and silent shore!
Shall we not meet as heretofore
Some summer morning;

When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day, —
A bliss that would not go away, —
A sweet forewarning?

THE HOUSEKEEPER.

THE frugal snail, with forecast of repose,
Carries his house with him where'er he goes;

Peeps out, — and if there comes a shower of rain,
Retreats to his small domicile again.
Touch but a tip of him, a horn,—'tis well, —
He curls up in his sanctuary shell.
He 's his own landlord, his own tenant; stay
Long as he will, he dreads no quarter-day.
Himself he boards and lodges; both invites
And feasts himself; sleeps with himself o' nights.
He spares the upholsterer trouble to procure
Chattels; himself is his own furniture,
And his sole riches. Wheresoe'er he roam, —
Knock when you will, — he's sure to be at home.

LÆTITIA ELIZABETH LANDON.

SUCCESS ALONE SEEN.

Few know of life's beginnings — men behold
The goal achieved; — the warrior, when his sword
Flashes red triumph in the noonday sun;
The poet, when his lyre hangs on the palm;
The statesman, when the crowd proclaim his voice,
And mould opinion on his gifted tongue:
They count not life's first steps, and never think
Upon the many miserable hours
When hope deferred was sickness to the heart.
They reckon not the battle and the march,
The long privations of a wasted youth;
They never see the banner till unfurled.
What are to them the solitary nights
Passed pale and anxiously by the sickly lamp,
Till the young poet wins the world at last
To listen to the music long his own?
The crowd attend the statesman's fiery mind
That makes their destiny; but they do not trace
Its struggle, or its long expectancy.
Hard are life's early steps; and, but that youth
Is buoyant, confident, and strong in hope,
Men would behold its threshold, and despair.

THE LITTLE SHROUD.

. . . . .

She had lost many children — now
The last of them was gone:
And day and night she sat and wept
Beside the funeral stone.

One midnight, while her constant tears
Were falling with the dew,
She heard a voice, and lo! her child
Stood by her, weeping too!

His shroud was damp, his face was white;
He said — "I cannot sleep,
Your tears have made my shroud so wet;
O mother, do not weep!"

Oh, love is strong! — the mother's heart
Was filled with tender fears;
Oh, love is strong! — and for her child
Her grief restrained its tears.

One eve a light shone round her bed,
And there she saw him stand —
Her infant in his little shroud,
A taper in his hand.

"Lo! mother, see my shroud is dry,
And I can sleep once more!"
And beautiful the parting smile
The little infant wore.

. . . .

The mother went her household ways —
Again she knelt in prayer,
And only asked of heaven its aid
Her heavy lot to bear.

THE POET.

Ah, deeply the minstrel has felt all he sings,
Every passion he paints his own bosom has known;
No note of wild music is swept from the strings,
But first his own feelings have echoed the tone.

Then say not his love is a fugitive fire,
That the heart can be ice while the lip is of flame:
Oh, say not that truth does not dwell with the lyre:
For the pulse of the heart and the harp are the same.

SIR WALTER SCOTT AT POMPEII.

I see the ancient master pale and worn,
Though on him shines the lovely southern heaven,
And Naples greets him with festivity.

The dying by the dead: for his great sake
They have laid bare the city of the lost:
His own creations fill the silent streets;
The Roman pavement rings with golden spurs,
The Highland plaid shades dark Italian eyes,
And the young king himself is Ivanhoe.

But there the old man sits, — majestic, wan,
Himself a mighty vision of the past;
The glorious mind has bowed beneath its toil;
He does not hear his name on foreign lips
That thank him for a thousand happy hours:
He does not see the glittering groups that press
In wonder and in homage to his side;
Death is beside his triumph.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

RUBIES.

Often I have heard it said
That her lips are ruby red.
Little heed I what they say,
I have seen as red as they.
Ere she smiled on other men,
Real rubies were they then.

When she kissed me once in play,
Rubies were less bright than they,
And less bright were those which shone
In the palace of the sun.
Will they be as bright again?
Not if kissed by other men.

IN NO HASTE.

Nay, thank me not again for those
Camellias, that untimely rose;
But if, whence you might please the more,

And win the few unwon before,
I sought the flowers you love to wear,
O'erjoyed to see them in your hair,
Upon my grave, I pray you set
One primrose or one violet.
. . . Stay . . . I can wait a little yet.

ROSE AYLMER.

Ah, what avails the sceptred race?
Ah, what the form divine?
What every virtue, every grace?
Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep but never see,
A night of memories and of sighs
I consecrate to thee.

DEATH OF THE DAY.

My pictures blacken in their frames
As night comes on,
And youthful maids and wrinkled dames
Are now all one.

Death of the Day! a sterner Death
Did worse before;
The fairest form, the sweetest breath
Away he bore.

I WILL NOT LOVE.

I will *not love!* These sounds have often
Burst from a troubled breast;
Rarely from one no sighs could soften,
Rarely from one at rest.

A REQUEST.

The place where soon I think to lie,
In its old creviced nook hard by,
Rears many a weed:
If parties bring you there, will you
Drop slyly in a grain or two
Of wallflower seed?

I shall not see it, and (too sure!)
I shall not ever hear that your
Light step was there;
But the rich odor some fine day
Will, what I cannot do, repay
That little care.

Sidney Lanier.

EVENING SONG.

Look off, dear Love, across the sallow sands,
And mark yon meeting of the sun and sea;
How long they kiss in sight of all the lands!
Ah, longer, longer we.

Now in the sea's red vintage melts the sun,
As Egypt's pearl dissolved in rosy wine,
And Cleopatra Night drinks all. 'Tis done!
Love, lay thy hand in mine.

Come forth, sweet stars, and comfort heaven's heart;
Glimmer, ye waves, round else unlighted sands;
O Night, divorce our sun and moon apart,—
Never our lips, our hands.

FROM THE FLATS.

What heartache,—ne'er a hill!
Inexorable, vapid, vague and chill,
The drear sand-levels drain my spirit low,
With one poor word they tell me all they know;

Whereat their stupid tongues, to tease my pain,
Do draw it o'er again and o'er again.
They hurt my heart with griefs I cannot name:
Always the same, the same.

Nature hath no surprise,
No ambuscade of beauty, 'gainst mine eyes
From brake, or lurking dell, or deep defile;
No humors, frolic forms,— this mile, that mile;
No rich reserves or happy-valley hopes
Beyond the bends of roads, the distant slopes.
Her fancy fails, her wild is all run tame:
Ever the same, the same.

Oh! might I through these tears
But glimpse some hill my Georgia high uprears,
Where white the quartz, and pink the pebbles shine,
The hickory heavenward strives, the muscadine
Swings o'er the slope; the oak's far-falling shade
Darkens the dog-wood in the bottom glade,
And down the hollow from a ferny nook
Bright leaps a living brook!

BETRAYAL.

The sun has kissed the violet sea,
And turned the violet to a rose.
O Sea! wouldst thou not better be
Mere violet still? Who knows? who knows?
Well hides the violet in the wood:
The dead leaf wrinkles her a hood,
And winter's ill is violet's good;
But the bold glory of the rose,
It quickly comes and quickly goes;
Red petals whirling in white snows,
Ah me!

The sun has burnt the rose-red sea:
The rose is turned to ashes gray.
O Sea! O Sea! mightst thou but be
The violet thou hast been to-day!
The sun is brave, the sun is bright,
The sun is lord of love and light;
But after him it cometh night.
O anguish of the lonesome dark!
Once a girl's body, stiff and stark,
Was laid in a tomb without a mark.
Ah me!

LUCY LARCOM.

HANNAH BINDING SHOES.

Poor lone Hannah,
Sitting at the window, binding shoes,
Faded, wrinkled,
Sitting, stitching, in a mournful muse.
Bright-eyed beauty once was she,
When the bloom was on the tree:
Spring and winter,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Not a neighbor,
Passing nod or answer will refuse,
To her whisper,
"Is there from the fishers any news?"
Oh, her heart's adrift, with one
On an endless voyage gone!
Night and morning,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Fair young Hannah,
Ben, the sunburnt fisher, gayly woos:
Hale and clever,
For a willing heart and hand he sues.
May-day skies are all aglow,
And the waves are laughing so!

For her wedding
Hannah leaves her window and her shoes.

May is passing:
Mid the apple-boughs a pigeon coos,
Hannah shudders,
For the mild southwester mischief brews.
Round the rocks of Marblehead,
Outward bound, a schooner sped:
Silent, lonesome,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

'Tis November,
Now no tear her wasted cheek bedews.
From Newfoundland
Not a sail returning will she lose,
Whispering hoarsely, "Fishermen,
Have you, have you heard of Ben?"
Old with watching,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

Twenty winters
Bleach and tear the ragged shore she views
Twenty seasons,—
Never one has brought her any news.
Still her dim eyes silently
Chase the white sails o'er the sea:
Hopeless, faithful,
Hannah's at the window, binding shoes.

[*From Hints.*]

THE CURTAIN OF THE DARK.

THE curtain of the dark
Is pierced by many a rent:
Out of the star-wells, spark on spark
Trickles through night's torn tent.

Grief is a tattered tent
Wherethrough God's light doth shine.
Who glances up, at every rent
Shall catch a ray divine.

UNWEDDED.

BEHOLD her there in the evening sun,
That kindles the Indian summer trees
To a separate burning bush, one by one,
Wherein the Glory Divine she sees!

Mate and nestlings she never had:
Kith and kindred have passed away;
Yet the sunset is not more gently glad,
That follows her shadow, and fain would stay.

For out of her life goes a breath of bliss,
And a sunlike charm from her cheerful eye,
That the cloud and the loitering breeze would miss;
A balm that refreshes the passer-by.

"Did she choose it, this single life?"
Gossip, she saith not, and who can tell?
But many a mother, and many a wife,
Draws a lot more lonely, we all know well.

Doubtless she had her romantic dream,
Like other maidens, in May-time sweet,
That flushes the air with a lingering gleam,
And goldens the grass beneath her feet:—

A dream unmoulded to visible form,
That keeps the world rosy with mists of youth,
And holds her in loyalty close and warm,
To her fine ideal of manly truth.

"But is she happy, a woman alone?"
Gossip, alone in this crowded earth,

With a voice to quiet its hourly moan,
And a smile to heighten its rarer mirth!

There are ends more worthy than happiness:
Who seeks it, is digging joy's grave, we know.
The blessed are they who but live to bless;
She found out that mystery, long ago.

To her motherly, sheltering atmosphere,
The children hasten from icy homes:
The outcast is welcome to share her cheer;
And the saint with a fervent benison comes.

For the heart of woman is large as man's;
God gave her his orphaned world to hold,
And whispered through her His deeper plans
To save it alive from the outer cold.

And here is a woman who understood
Herself, her work, and God's will with her,
To gather and scatter His sheaves of good,
And was meekly thankful, though men demur.

Would she have walked more nobly, think,
With a man beside her, to point the way,
Hand joining hand in the marriage-link?
Possibly, Yes; it is likelier, Nay.

For all men have not wisdom and might:
Love's eyes are tender, and blur the map;
And a wife will follow by faith, not sight,
In the chosen footprint, at any hap.

In the comfort of home who is gladder than she?
Yet, stirred by no murmur of "might have been,"
Her heart as a carolling bird soars free,
With the song of each nest she has glanced within.

Having the whole, she covets no part:
Hers is the bliss of all blessèd things.
The tears that unto her eyelids start,
Are those which a generous pity brings;

Or the sympathy of heroic faith
With a holy purpose, achieved or lost.
To stifle the truth is to stop her breath,
For she rates a lie at its deadly cost.

Her friends are good women and faithful men,
Who seek for the true, and uphold the right;
And who shall proclaim her the weaker, when
Her very presence puts sin to flight?

"And dreads she never the coming years?"
Gossip, what are the years to her?
All winds are fair, and the harbor nears,
And every breeze a delight will stir.

Transfigured under the sunset trees,
That wreathe her with shadowy gold and red,
She looks away to the purple seas,
Whereon her shallop will soon be sped.

She reads the hereafter by the here:
A beautiful Now, and a better To Be:
In life is all sweetness, in death no fear,—
You waste your pity on such as she.

HAND IN HAND WITH ANGELS.

Hand in hand with angels,
Through the world we go;
Brighter eyes are on us
Than we blind ones know;
Tenderer voices cheer us
Than we deaf will own;
Never, walking heavenward,
Can we walk alone.

Hand in hand with angels,
In the busy street,
By the winter hearth-fires,—
Everywhere,— we meet,
Though unfledged and songless,
Birds of Paradise;
Heaven looks at us daily
Out of human eyes.

Hand in hand with angels;
Oft in menial guise;
By the same strait pathway
Prince and beggar rise.
If we drop the fingers,
Toil-imbrowned and worn,
Then one link with heaven
From our life is torn.

Hand in hand with angels:
Some are fallen,— alas!
Soiled wings trail pollution
Over all they pass.
Lift them into sunshine!
Bid them seek the sky!
Weaker is your soaring,
When they cease to fly.

Hand in hand with angels;
Some are out of sight,
Leading us, unknowing,
Into paths of light.
Some dear hands are loosened
From our earthly clasp,
Soul in soul to hold us
With a firmer grasp.

Hand in hand with angels,—
'Tis a twisted chain,
Winding heavenward, earthward,
Linking joy and pain.
There's a mournful jarring,
There's a clank of doubt,
If a heart grows heavy,
Or a hand's left out.

Hand in hand with angels
Walking every day;—
How the chain may lengthen,
None of us can say.
But we know it reaches
From earth's lowliest one,
To the shining seraph,
Throned beyond the sun.

Hand in hand with angels!
Blessed so to be!
Helped are all the helpers;
Giving light, they see.
He who aids another
Strengthens more than one;
Sinking earth he grapples
To the Great White Throne.

A STRIP OF BLUE.

I do not own an inch of land,
But all I see is mine,—
The orchard and the mowing-fields,
The lawns and gardens fine.
The winds my tax-collectors are,
They bring me tithes divine,—
Wild scents and subtle essences,
A tribute rare and free:
And more magnificent than all,
My window keeps for me
A glimpse of blue immensity,—
A little strip of sea.

Richer am I than he who owns
Great fleets and argosies;
I have a share in every ship
Won by the inland breeze
To loiter on yon airy road
Above the apple-trees.
I freight them with my untold dreams,

Each bears my own picked crew;
And nobler cargoes wait for them
Than ever India knew,—
My ships that sail into the East
Across that outlet blue.

Sometimes they seem like living shapes,—
The people of the sky,—
Guests in white raiment coming down
From heaven, which is close by:
I call them by familiar names,
As one by one draws nigh,
So white, so light, so spirit-like,
From violet mists they bloom!
The aching wastes of the unknown
Are half reclaimed from gloom,
Since on life's hospitable sea
All souls find sailing-room.

The ocean grows a weariness
With nothing else in sight;
Its east and west, its north and south,
Spread out from morn to night:
We miss the warm, caressing shore,
Its brooding shade and light.
A part is greater than the whole;
By hints are mysteries told;
The fringes of eternity,—
God's sweeping garment-fold,
In that bright shred of glimmering sea,
I reach out for, and hold.

The sails, like flakes of roseate pearl,
Float in upon the mist;
The waves are broken precious stones,—
Sapphire and amethyst,
Washed from celestial basement walls
By suns unsetting kissed.

Out through the utmost gates of space,
Past where the gray stars drift,
To the widening Infinite, my soul
Glides on, a vessel swift;
Yet loses not her anchorage
In yonder azure rift.

Here sit I, as a little child:
The threshold of God's door
Is that clear band of chrysoprase;
Now the vast temple floor,
The blinding glory of the dome
I bow my head before.
The universe, O God, is home,
In height or depth, to me;
Yet here upon thy footstool green
Content am I to be;
Glad, when is opened to my need
Some sea-like glimpse of thee.

[*From Hints.*]

HEAVEN NEAR THE VIRTUOUS.

THEY whose hearts are whole and strong,
Loving holiness,
Living clean from soil of wrong,
Wearing truth's white dress,—
They unto no far-off height
Wearily need climb;
Heaven to them is close in sight
From these shores of time.

Only the anointed eye
Sees in common things,—
Gleams dropped daily from the sky;
Heavenly blossomings.
To the hearts where light has birth
Nothing can be drear;
Budding through the bloom of earth,
Heaven is always near.

GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.

TO MY SON.

Do you remember, my sweet, absent son,
How in the soft June days forever done
You loved the heavens so warm and clear and high;
And when I lifted you, soft came your cry —
"Put me 'way up — 'way up in the blue sky?"

I laughed and said I could not; set you down,
Your gray eyes wonder-filled beneath that crown
Of bright hair gladdening me as you raced by.
Another Father now, more strong than I,
Has borne you voiceless to your dear blue sky.

NEW WORLDS.

With my beloved I lingered late one night.
At last the hour when I must leave her came:
But, as I turned, a fear I could not name
Possessed me that the long sweet evening might
Prelude some sudden storm, whereby delight
Should perish. What if Death, ere dawn, should claim
One of us? What, though living, not the same
Each should appear to each in morning light?

Changed did I find her, truly, the next day:
Ne'er could I see her as of old again,
That strange mood seemed to draw a cloud away,
And let her beauty pour through every vein
Sunlight and life, part of me. Thus the lover
With each new morn a new world may discover.

THE LILY-POND.

Some fairy spirit with his wand,
I think, has hovered o'er the dell,
And spread this film upon the pond,
And touched it with this drowsy spell,

For here the musing soul is merged
In moods no other scene can bring,
And sweeter seems the air when scourged
With wandering wild-bees' murmuring.

One ripple streaks the little lake,
Sharp purple-blue; the birches, thin
And silvery, crowd the edge, yet break
To let a straying sunbeam in.

How came we through the yielding wood,
That day, to this sweet-rustling shore?
Oh, there together while we stood,
A butterfly was wafted o'er,

In sleepy light; and even now
His glimmering beauty doth return
Upon me when the soft winds blow,
And lilies toward the sunlight yearn.

The yielding wood? And yet 'twas loth
To yield unto our happy march;
Doubtful it seemed, at times, if both
Could pass its green, elastic arch.

Yet there, at last, upon the marge
We found ourselves, and there, behold,
In hosts the lilies, white and large,
Lay close with hearts of downy gold!

Deep in the weedy waters spread
The rootlets of the placid bloom:
So sprung my love's flower, that was bred
In deep still waters of heart's-gloom.

So sprung; and so that morn was nursed
To live in light, and on the pool
Wherein its roots were deep immersed
Burst into beauty broad and cool.

Few words were said; a moment passed;
I know not how it came — that awe
And ardor of a glance that cast
Our love in universal law.

But all at once a bird sang loud,
From dead twigs of the gleamy beech;
His notes dropped dewy, as from a cloud,
A blessing on our married speech.

Ah, Love! how fresh and rare, even now,
That moment and that mood return
Upon me, when the soft winds blow,
And lilies toward the sunlight yearn!

SAILOR'S SONG.

The sea goes up, the sky comes down.
Oh, can you spy the ancient town,—
The granite hills so hard and gray,
That rib the land behind the bay?
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys: send her home!
O ye ho!

Three years? Is it so long that we
Have lived upon the lonely sea?
Oh, often I thought we'd see the town,
When the sea went up, and the sky came down.
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys; send her home!
O ye ho!

Even the winter winds would rouse
A memory of my father's house;
For round his windows and his door
They made the same deep, mouthless roar.
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys: send her home!
O ye ho!

And when the summer's breezes beat,
Methought I saw the sunny street
Where stood my Kate. Beneath her hand
She gazed far out, far out from land.
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys: send her home!
O ye ho!

Farthest away, I oftenest dreamed
That I was with her. Then, it seemed
A single stride the ocean wide
Had bridged and brought me to her side.
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys: send her home!
O ye ho!

But though so near we're drawing, now,
'T is farther off — I know not how.
We sail and sail: we see no home.
Would we into the port were come!
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys: send her home!
O ye ho!

At night, the same stars o'er the mast:
The mast sways round — however fast

We fly — still sways and swings around
One scanty circle's starry bound.
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys: send her home!
O ye ho!

Ah, many a month those stars have shone,
And many a golden morn has flown,
Since that so solemn happy morn,
When, I away, my babe was born.
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys: send her home!
O ye ho!

And, though so near we're drawing now,
'T is farther off — I know not how —
I would not aught amiss had come
To babe or mother there, at home!
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys: send her home!
O ye ho!

'T is but a seeming; swiftly rush
The seas, beneath. I hear the crush
Of foamy ridges 'gainst the prow.
Longing outspeeds the breeze, I know.
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys: send her home!
O ye ho!

Patience, my mates! Though not this eve,
We cast our anchor, yet believe,
If but the wind holds, short the run:
We'll sail in with to-morrow's sun.
O ye ho, boys! Spread her wings!
Fair winds, boys: send her home!
O ye ho!

A FACE IN THE STREET.

Poor, withered face, that yet was once so fair,
Grown ashen-old in the wild fires of lust —
Thy star-like beauty, dimmed with earthly dust,
Yet breathing of a purer native air;
They who, whilom, cursed vultures, sought a share
Of thy dead womanhood, their greed unjust
Have satisfied, have stripped and left thee bare.
Still, like a leaf warped by the autumn gust,
And driving to the end, thou wrapp'st in flame
And perfume all thy hollow-eyed decay,
Feigning on those gray cheeks the blush that Shame
Took with her when she fled long since away.
Ah God! rain fire upon this foul-souled city
That gives such death, and spares its men,— for pity!

EMMA LAZARUS.

[*From Scenes in the Wood. Suggested by Robert Schumann.*]

PLEASANT PROSPECT.

Hail, free, clear heavens! above our heads again,
With white-winged clouds that melt before the sun:
Hail, good green earth! with blossoms, grass and grain:
O'er the soft rye what silvery ripples run!
What tawny shadows! Slowly we have won
This high hill's top: on the wood's edge we stand,
While like a sea below us rolls the land.
The meadows blush with clover, and the air
Is honeyed with its keen but spicy smell;
In silence graze the kine, but everywhere

Pipe the glad birds that in the forest dwell;
Where hearths are set curled wreaths of vapor tell;
Life's grace and promise win the soul again;
Hope floods the heart like sunshine after rain.

[*From Scenes in the Wood. Suggested by Robert Schumann.*]

NIGHT.

White stars begin to prick the wan blue sky,
The trees arise, thick, black and tall: between
Their slim, dark boles, gray, film-winged gnats that fly
Against the failing western red are seen.
The footpaths dumb with moss have lost their green.
Mysterious shadows settle everywhere,
A passionate murmur trembles in the air.

Sweet scents wax richer, freshened with cool dews,
The whole vast forest seems to breathe, to sigh
With rustle, hum and whisper that confuse
The listening ear, blent with the fitful cry
Of some belated bird. In the far sky,
Throbbing with stars, there stirs a weird unrest,
Strange joy, akin to pain, fulfils the breast —

A longing born of fears and promises,
A wild desire, a hope that heeds no bound.
A ray of moonlight struggling through the trees
Startles us like a phantom; on the ground
Fall curious shades; white glory spreads around;
The wood is past, and tranquil meadows wide,
Bathed in bright vapor, stretch on every side.

A MARCH VIOLET.

Black boughs against a pale clear sky,
Slight mists of cloud-wreaths floating by:
Soft sunlight, gray-blue smoky air,
Wet thawing snows on hillsides bare;
Loud streams, moist sodden earth; below
Quick seedlings stir, rich juices flow
Through frozen veins of rigid wood,
And the whole forest bestirs in bud.
No longer stark the branches spread
An iron network overhead.
Albeit naked still of green;
Through this soft, lustrous vapor seen
On budding boughs a warm flush glows,
With tints of purple and pale rose.
Breathing of spring, the delicate air
Lifts playfully the loosend hair
To kiss the cool brow. Let us rest
In this bright, sheltered nook, now blest
With broad noon sunshine over all,
Though here June's leafiest shadows fall.
Young grass sprouts here. Look up! the sky
Is veiled by woven greenery.
Fresh little folded leaves — the first,
And goldener than green, they burst
Their thick full buds and take the breeze.
Here, when November stripped the trees.
I came to wrestle with a grief:
Solace I sought not, nor relief.
I shed no tears, I craved no grace
I fain would see Grief face to face,
Fathom her awful eyes at length,
Measure my strength against her strength,
I wondered why the Preacher saith,
"Like as the grass that withereth."

The late, close blades still waved around;
I clutched a handful from the ground.
"He mocks us cruelly," I said:
"The frail herb lives and she is dead."
I lay dumb, sightless, deaf as she;
The long slow hours passed over me,
I saw Grief face to face; I know
The very form and traits of Woe.
I drained the galled dregs of the draught
She offered me: I could have laughed
In irony of sheer despair,
Although I could not weep. The air
Thickened with twilight shadows dim:
I rose and left. I knew each limb
Of these great trees, each gnarled, rough root
Piercing the clay, each cone of fruit
They bear in autumn.
What blooms here,
Filling the honeyed atmosphere
With faint, delicious fragrancies,
Freighted with blessed memories?
The earliest March violet,
Dear as the image of Regret,
And beautiful as Hope. Again
Past visions thrill and haunt my brain,
Through tears I see the nodding head,
The purple and the green dispread.
Here, where I nursed despair that morn,
The promise of fresh joy is born,
Arrayed in sober colors still,
But piercing the gray mould to fill
With vague sweet influence the air,
To lift the heart's dead weight of care.
Longings and golden dreams to bring
With joyous phantasies of spring.

REMEMBER.

Remember Him, the only One,
Now, ere the years flow by, —
Now, while the smile is on thy lip,
The light within thine eye.
Now, ere for thee the sun have lost
Its glory and its light,
And earth rejoice thee not with flowers,
Nor with the stars the night.
Now, while thou lovest earth, because
She is so wondrous fair
With daisies and with primroses,
And sunlit, waving air;
And not because her bosom holds
Thy dearest and thy best,
And some day will thyself infold
In calm and peaceful rest.
Now, while thou lovest violets,
Because mid grass they wave,
And not because they bloom upon
Some early-shapen grave.
Now, while thou lovest trembling stars,
But just because they shine,
And not because they're nearer one
Who never can be thine.
Now, while thou lovest music's strains,
Because they cheer thy heart,
And not because from aching eyes
They make the tear-drops start.
Now, whilst thou lovest all on earth
And deemest all will last,
Before thy hope is vanished quite,
And every joy has past;
Remember Him, the only One,
Before the days draw nigh
When thou shalt have no joy in them,
And praying, yearn to die.

CHARLES GODFREY LELAND.

MINE OWN.

AND oh, the longing, burning eyes!
And oh, the gleaming hair
Which waves around me, night and day,
O'er chamber, hall, and stair!

And oh, the step, half-dreamt, half heard!
And oh, the laughter low!
And memories of merriment
Which faded long ago!

Oh, art thou Sylph,—or truly Self,—
Or either at thy choice?
Oh, speak in breeze or beating heart,
But let me hear thy voice!

"Oh, some do call me Laughter, love;
And some do call me Sin:"
"And they may call thee what they will,
So I thy love may win."

"And some do call me Wantonness,
And some do call me Play:"
"Oh, they might call thee what they would
If thou wert mine alway!"

"And some do call me Sorrow, love,
And some do call me Tears,
And some there be who name me Hope,
And some that name me Fears.

"And some do call me Gentle Heart
And some Forgetfulness:"
"And if thou com'st as one or all,
Thou comest but to bless!"

"And some do call me Life, sweetheart,
And some do call me Death;
And he to whom the two are one
Has won my heart and faith."

She twined her white arms round his neck:—
The tears fell down like rain.
"And if I live or if I die,
We'll never part again."

◆

JOHN LEYDEN.

ODE TO AN INDIAN COIN.

SLAVE of the dark and dirty mine!
What vanity has brought thee here?
How can I love to see thee shine
So bright, whom I have bought so dear?—
The tent-ropes flapping lone I hear,
For twilight converse, arm in arm;
The jackal's shriek bursts on mine ear
Whom mirth and music wont to charm.

By Cherical's dark wandering streams,
Where cane-tufts shadow all the wild,
Sweet visions haunt my waking dreams
Of Teviot loved while still a child,
Of castled rocks stupendous piled
By Esk or Eden's classic wave,
Where loves of youth and friendship smiled,
Uncursed by thee, vile yellow slave!

Fade, day-dreams sweet, from memory fade!—
The perished bliss of youth's first prime,
That once so bright on fancy played,
Revives no more in after time.
Far from my sacred natal clime,

I haste to an untimely grave;
The daring thoughts that soared sublime
Are sunk in ocean's southern wave,

Slave of the mine! thy yellow light
Gleams baleful as the tomb-fire drear.
A gentle vision comes by night
My lonely widowed heart to cheer;
Her eyes are dim with many a tear,
That once were guiding stars to mine:
Her fond heart throbs with many a fear!
I cannot bear to see thee shine.

For thee, for thee, vile yellow slave,
I left a heart that loved me true!
I crossed the tedious ocean-wave,
To roam in climes unkind and new
The cold wind of the stranger blew
Chill on my withered heart: the grave
Dark and untimely met my view,—
And all for thee, vile yellow slave!

Ha! comest thou now so late to mock
A wanderer's banished heart forlorn,
Now that his frame the lightning shock
Of sun-rays tipt with death has borne?
From love, from friendship, country, torn,
To memory's fond regrets the prey,
Vile slave, thy yellow dross I scorn
Go mix thee with thy kindred clay!

THOMAS LODGE.

ROSALINE.

LIKE to the clear in highest sphere,
Where all imperial glory shines,
Of self-same color is her hair,
Whether unfolded or in twines:

Her eyes are sapphires set in snow,
Refining heaven by every wink;
The gods do fear when as they glow,
And I do tremble when I think.

Her cheeks are like the blushing cloud,
That beautifies Aurora's face;
Or like the silver crimson shroud,
That Phœbus' smiling looks doth grace.

Her lips are like two budded roses,
Whom ranks of lilies neighbor nigh;
Within which bounds she balm encloses,
Apt to entice a deity.

Her neck like to a stately tower,
Where love himself imprisoned lies,
To watch for glances, every hour,
From her divine and sacred eyes.

. . . . .

With orient pearl, with ruby red,
With marble white, with sapphire blue,
Her body everywhere is fed,
Yet soft in touch and sweet in view.

Nature herself her shape admires;
The gods are wounded in her sight;
And Love forsakes his heavenly fires,
And at her eyes his brand doth light.

JOHN LOGAN.

THE CUCKOO.

HAIL, beauteous stranger of the grove!
Thou messenger of spring!
Now heaven repairs thy rural seat,
And woods thy welcome sing.

Soon as the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear.
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year?

Delightful visitant! with thee
I hail the time of flowers,
And hear the sound of music sweet
From birds among the bowers.

The schoolboy, wandering through the wood
To pull the primrose gay,
Starts thy most curious voice to hear,
And imitates thy lay.

What time the pea puts on the bloom.
Thou fliest thy vocal vale,
An annual guest in other lands,
Another spring to hail.

Sweet bird! thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year!

Oh, could I fly, I'd fly with thee!
We'd make with joyful wing,
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Attendants on the spring.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

THE LADDER OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

SAINT AUGUSTINE! well hast thou said,
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!

All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

The low desire, the base design,
That makes another's virtues less:
The revel of the ruddy wine,
And all occasions of excess:

The longing for ignoble things:
The strife for triumph more than truth;
The hardening of the heart, that brings
Irreverence for the dreams of youth;

All thoughts of ill: all evil deeds,
That have their root in thoughts of ill:
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the nobler will;—

All these must first be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

We have not wings, we cannot soar;
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The mighty pyramids of stone
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs,
When nearer seen, and better known,
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

The distant mountains, that uprear
Their solid bastions to the skies,
Are crossed by pathways, that appear
As we to higher levels rise.

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern — unseen before —
A path to higher destinies.

Nor deem the irrevocable Past
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last,
To something nobler we attain.

WEARINESS.

O little feet ! that such long years
Must wander on through hopes and fears
Must ache and bleed beneath your load;
I, nearer to the wayside inn
Where toil shall cease, and rest begin.
Am weary, thinking of your road.

O little hands! that weak or strong,
Have still to serve or rule so long,
Have still so long to give or ask;
I, who so much with book and pen
Have toiled among my fellow-men,
Am weary, thinking of your task.

O little hearts! that throb and beat
With such impatient, feverish heat,
Such limitless and strong desires;
Mine that so long has glowed and burned,
With passions into ashes turned
Now covers and conceals its fires,

O little souls! as pure and white
And crystalline as rays of light
Direct from heaven, their source divine;
Refracted through the mist of years,
How red my setting sun appears,
How lurid looks this soul of mine!

THE MEETING.

After so long an absence
At last we meet again;
Does the meeting give us pleasure,
Or does it give us pain?

The tree of life has been shaken,
And but few of us linger now,
Like the Prophet's two or three berries
In the top of the uppermost bough.

We cordially greet each other
In the old familiar tone;
And we think, though we do not say it,
How old and gray he is grown!

We speak of a Merry Christmas,
And many a happy New Year;
But each in his heart is thinking
Of those that are not here.

We speak of friends and their fortunes,
And of what they did and said,
Till the dead alone seem living,
And the living alone seem dead.

And at last we hardly distinguish
Between the ghosts and the guests;
And a mist and shadow of sadness
Steals over our merriest jests.

STAY, STAY AT HOME, MY HEART, AND REST.

Stay, stay at home, my heart, and rest;
Home-keeping hearts are happiest,
For those that wander they know not where
Are full of trouble and full of care;
To stay at home is best.

Weary and homesick and distressed,
They wander east, they wander west,
And are baffled and beaten and blown about
By the winds of the wilderness of doubt;
To stay at home is best.

Then stay at home, my heart, and rest:
The bird is safest in its nest;
O'er all that flutter their wings and fly,
A hawk is hovering in the sky:
To stay at home is best.

NATURE.

As a fond mother, when the day is o'er,
Leads by the hand her little child to bed,
Half-willing, half-reluctant to be led,
And leave his broken playthings on the floor,
Still gazing at them through the open door;
Nor wholly reassured and comforted
By promises of others in their stead,
Which, though more splendid, may not please him more;
So Nature deals with us, and takes away
Our playthings one by one, and by the hand
Leads us to rest so gently, that we go
Scarce knowing if we wish to go or stay,
Being too full of sleep to understand
How far the unknown transcends the what we know.

THE TIDES.

I SAW the long line of the vacant shore,
The sea-weed and the shells upon the sand,
And the brown rocks left bare on every hand,
As if the ebbing tide would flow no more.
Then heard I, more distinctly than before,
The ocean breathe, and its great breast expand;
And hurrying came on the defenceless land
The insurgent waters with tumultuous roar.
All thought and feeling and desire, I said,
Love, laughter, and the exultant joy of song.
Have ebbed from me forever! Suddenly o'er me
They swept again from their deep ocean-bed,
And in a tumult of delight, and strong
As youth, and beautiful as youth, upbore me.

MAIDEN AND WEATHERCOCK.

MAIDEN.

O WEATHERCOCK on the village spire,
With your golden feathers all on fire,
Tell me, what can you see from your perch
Above there over the tower of the church?

WEATHERCOCK.

I can see the roofs and the streets below,
And the people moving to and fro,
And beyond, without either roof or street,
The great salt sea, and the fisherman's fleet.

I can see a ship come sailing in
Beyond the headlands and harbor of Lynn,
And a young man standing on the deck,
With a silken kerchief round his neck.

Now he is pressing it to his lips,
And now he is kissing his finger-tips,

And now he is lifting and waving his hand,
And blowing the kisses toward the land.

MAIDEN.

Ah! that is the ship from over the sea,
That is bringing my lover back to me,
Bringing my lover so fond and true,
Who does not change with the wind like you.

WEATHERCOCK.

If I change with all the winds that blow.
It is only because they made me so,
And people would think it wondrous strange,
If I, a weathercock, should not change.

O pretty maiden, so fine and fair,
With your dreamy eyes and your golden hair,
When you and your lover meet today
You will thank me for looking some other way!

THREE FRIENDS OF MINE.

THE doors are all wide open; at the gate
The blossomed lilacs counterfeit a blaze,
And seem to warm the air; a dreamy haze
Hangs o'er the Brighton meadows like a fate;
And on their margin, with sea-tides elate,
The flooded Charles, as in the happier days,
Writes the last letter of his name, and stays
His restless steps, as if compelled to wait.
I also wait; but they will come no more,
Those friends of mine, whose presence satisfied
The thirst and hunger of my heart.
Ah me!
They have forgotten the pathway to my door!
Something is gone from nature since they died,
And summer is not summer, nor can be.

THE TWO ANGELS.

Two angels, one of Life and one of Death,
Passed o'er our village as the morning broke;
The dawn was on their faces, and beneath,
The sombre houses hearsed with plumes of smoke.

Their attitude and aspect were the same,
Alike their features and their robes of white,
But one was crowned with amaranth as with flame,
And one with asphodels, like flakes of light.

I saw them pause on their celestial way:
Then said I, with deep fear and doubt oppressed.
"Beat not so loud, my heart, lest thou betray
The place where thy beloved are at rest!"

And he who wore the crown of asphodels,
Descending, at my door began to knock,
And my soul sank within me, as in wells
The waters sink before an earthquake's shock.

I recognized the nameless agony,
The terror and the tremor and the pain,
That oft before had filled or haunted me,
And now returned with threefold strength again.

The door I opened to my heavenly guest,
And listened, for I thought I heard God's voice;
And, knowing whatsoe'er he sent was best,
Dared neither to lament nor to rejoice.

Then with a smile, that filled the house with light,
"My errand is not Death, but Life," he said;
And ere he answered, passing out of sight,
On his celestial embassy he sped.

'Twas at thy door, O friend, and not at mine,
The angel with the amaranthine wreath,
Pausing, descended, and with voice divine,
Whispered a word that had a sound like death.

Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,
A shadow on those features fair and thin;
And softly from that hushed and darkened room,
Two angels issued, where but one went in.

All is of God! If He but wave his hand.
The mists collect, the rain falls thick and loud,
Till, with a smile of light on sea and land,
Lo! He looks back from the departing cloud.

Angels of Life and Death alike are His;
Without His leave, they pass no threshold o'er;
Who, then, would wish or dare, believing this,
Against His messengers to shut the door?

A DAY OF SUNSHINE.

O GIFT of God! O perfect day:
Whereon shall no man work, but play
Whereon it is enough for me,
Not to be doing, but to be!

Through every fibre of my brain,
Through every nerve, through every vein,
I feel the electric thrill, the touch
Of life, that seems almost too much.

I hear the wind among the trees
Playing celestial symphonies;
I see the branches downward bent,
Like keys of some great instrument.

And over me unrolls on high
The splendid scenery of the sky,
Where through a sapphire sea, the sun
Sails like a golden galleon,

Towards yonder cloud-lands in the west,
Towards yonder Islands of the Blest,
Whose steep sierra far uplifts
Its craggy summits white with drifts.

Blow, winds! and waft through all the rooms
The snow-flakes of the cherry-blooms!
Blow, winds! and bend within my reach
The fiery blossoms of the peach!

O Life and Love! O happy throng
Of thoughts, whose only speech is song!
O heart of man! canst thou not be
Blithe as the air is, and as free?

SAMUEL LONGFELLOW.

FROM MIRE TO BLOSSOM.

NOVEMBER.

THE dead leaves, their rich mosaics
Of olive and gold and brown,
Had laid on the rain-wet pavement,
Through all the embowered town.

They were washed by the autumn tempest,
They were trod by hurrying feet,
And the maids came out with their besoms
And swept them into the street,

To be crushed and lost forever,
'Neath the wheels in the black mire lost;
The Summer's precious darlings,
She nurtured at such cost!

O words that have fallen from me!
O golden thoughts and true!
Must I see in the leaves, a symbol
Of the fate which awaiteth you?

APRIL.

Again has come the spring-time,
With the crocus's golden bloom,
With the smell of the fresh-turned earth-mould,
And the violet's perfume.

O gardener! tell me the secret
Of thy flowers so rare and sweet!
"I have only enriched my garden
With the black mire from the street!"

RICHARD LOVELACE.

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING BEYOND THE SEAS.

IF to be absent were to be
Away from thee;
Or that when I am gone
You or I were alone;
Then, my Lucasta, might I crave
Pity from blustering wind, or swallowing wave.

Though seas and land betwixt us both,
Our faith and troth,
Like separated souls,
All time and space controls:
Above the highest sphere we meet
Unseen, unknown, and greet as angels greet.

So then we do anticipate
Our after-fate,
And are alive in the skies,
If thus our lips and eyes
Can speak like spirits unconfined
In heaven, their earthly bodies left behind.

TO LUCASTA, ON GOING TO THE WARS.

TELL me not, sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind,
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you, too, shall adore,
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more.

SAMUEL LOVER.

OH! WATCH YOU WELL BY DAYLIGHT.

OH! watch you well by daylight,
By daylight may you fear,
But keep no watch in darkness —
The angels then are near;
For Heaven the sense bestoweth,
Our waking life to keep,
But tender mercy showeth,
To guard us in our sleep.
Then watch you well by daylight.
By daylight may you fear,
But keep no watch in darkness —
The angels then are near.

Oh! watch you well in pleasure —
For pleasure oft betrays,
But keep no watch in sorrow,
When joy withdraws its rays:
For in the hour of sorrow,
As in the darkness drear,
To Heaven entrust the morrow.
For the angels then are near.
O watch you well by daylight,
By daylight may you fear,
But keep no watch in darkness —
The angels then are near.

THE CHILD AND THE AUTUMN LEAF.

DOWN by the river's bank I strayed
Upon an autumn day;
Beside the fading forest there,
I saw a child at play.
She played among the yellow leaves—
The leaves that once were green,
And flung upon the passing stream
What once had blooming been:
Oh! deeply did it touch my heart
To see that child at play;
It was the sweet unconscious sport
Of childhood with decay.

Fair child, if by this stream you stray,
When after years go by,
The scene that makes thy childhood's sport,
May wake thy age's sigh:
When fast you see around you fall
The summer's leafy pride.
And mark the river hurrying on
Its ne'er returning tide;
Then may you feel in pensive mood
That life's a summer dream:
And man, at last, forgotten falls —
A leaf upon the stream.

THE ANGEL'S WING.

WHEN by the evening's quiet light
There sit two silent lovers.
They say, while in such tranquil plight,
An angel round them hovers;
And further still old legends tell, —
The first who breaks the silent spell,
To say a soft and pleasing thing,
Hath felt the passing angel's wing!

Thus, a musing minstrel strayed
By the summer ocean,
Gazing on a lovely maid,
With a bard's devotion: —
Yet this love he never spoke,
Till now the silent spell he broke; —
The hidden fire to flame did spring,
Fanned by the passing angel's wing!

"I have loved thee well and long,
With love of heaven's own making! —
This is not a poet's song,
But a true heart's speaking, —
I will love thee, still, untired!"
He felt — he spoke — as one inspired,
The words did from Truth's fountain spring,
Upwaken'd by the angel's wing.

Silence o'er the maiden fell,
Her beauty lovelier making; —
And by her blush, he knew full well
The dawn of love was breaking.
It came like sunshine o'er his heart!
He felt that they should never part,
She spoke — and oh! — the lovely thing
Had felt the passing angel's wing.

YIELD NOT, THOU SAD ONE, TO SIGHS.

Oh! yield not, thou sad one, to sighs.
Nor murmur at Destiny's will.
Behold, for each pleasure that flies,
Another replacing it still.
Time's wing, were it all of one feather,
Far slower would be in its flight:
The storm gives a charm to fine weather,
And day would seem dark without night.
Then yield not, thou sad one, to sighs.

When we look on some lake that repeats
The loveliness bounding its shore,
A breeze o'er the soft surface fleets,
And the mirror-like beauty is o'er.
But the breeze, ere it ruffled the deep,
Pervading the odorous bowers,
Awaken'd the flowers from their sleep,
And wafted their sweets to be ours.
Then yield not, thou sad one, to sighs.

Oh, blame not the change nor the flight
Of our joys as they're passing away,
'Tis the swiftness and change give delight —
They would pall if permitted to stay.
More gaily they glitter in flying,
They perish in lustre still bright,
Like the hues of the dolphin, in dying,
Or the humming-bird's wing in its flight.
Then yield not, thou sad one, to sighs.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

THE HERITAGE.

The rich man's son inherits lands,
And piles of brick, and stone, and gold,
And he inherits soft white hands,
And tender flesh that fears the cold,
Nor dares to wear a garment old;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits cares;
The bank may break, the factory burn,
A breath may burst his bubble shares,
And soft white hands could hardly earn
A living that would serve his turn;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits wants,
His stomach craves for dainty fare;
With sated heart, he hears the pants
Of toiling hinds with brown arms bare,
And wearies in his easy-chair;
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
Stout muscles and a sinewy heart,
A hardy frame, a hardier spirit;
King of two hands, he does his part
In every useful toil and art;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
Wishes o'erjoyed with humble things,
A rank adjudged by toil-worn merit,
Content that from employment springs,

A heart that in his labor sings;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
A patience learned of being poor,
Courage, if sorrow come, to bear it,
A fellow-feeling that is sure
To make the outcast bless his door;
A heritage, it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

O rich man's son! there is a toil
That with all others level stands;
Large charity doth never soil,
But only whiten, soft white hands.
This is the best crop from thy lands;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being rich to hold in fee.

O poor man's son! scorn not thy state;
There is worse weariness than thine,
In merely being rich and great;
Toil only gives the soul to shine,
And makes rest fragrant and benign;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Worth being poor to hold in fee.

Both, heirs to some six feet of sod,
Are equal in the earth at last;
Both, children of the same dear God,
Prove title to your heirship vast
By records of a well-filled past;
A heritage, it seems to me,
Well worth a life to hold in fee.

[*From the Vision of Sir Launfal.*]

THE GENEROSITY OF NATURE.

EARTH gets its price for what earth gives us;
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking:
'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking.
No price is set on the lavish summer;
June may be had by the poorest comer.
And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays:
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's palace;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
And lets his illumined being o'errun
With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings;

He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest,—
In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,
And whatever of life hath ebbed away
Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,
Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;
Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,
We are happy now because God wills it;
No matter how barren the past may have been,
'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green;
We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;
We may shut our eyes, but we cannot help knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing;
The breeze comes whispering in our ear,
That dandelions are blossoming near,
That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,
That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack;
We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing,—
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
Tells all in his lusty crowing!

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now,
Everything is upward striving;
'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue,—
'Tis the natural way of living:
Who knows whither the clouds have fled?
In the unscarred heaven they leave no wake;
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,
The heart forgets its sorrow and ache.

AFTER THE BURIAL.

Yes, faith is a goodly anchor;
When skies are sweet as a psalm,
At the bows it lolls so stalwart,
In bluff, broad-shouldered calm.

And when over breakers to leeward
The tattered surges are hurled.
It may keep our head to the tempest,
With its grip on the base of the world.

But, after the shipwreck, tell me
What help in its iron thews,
Still true to the broken hawser,
Deep down among sea-weed and ooze?

In the breaking gulfs of sorrow,
When the helpless feet stretch out
And find in the deeps of darkness
No footing so solid as doubt,

Then better one spar of memory,
One broken plank of the past,
That our human heart may cling to,
Though hopeless of shore at last!

To the spirit its splendid conjectures,
To the flesh its sweet despair,
Its tears o'er the thin-worn locket
With its anguish of deathless hair!

Immortal? I feel it and know it,
Who doubts it of such as she?
But that is the pang's very secret;
Immortal away from me!

There's a narrow ridge in the graveyard
Would scarce stay a child in his race,
But to me and my thought, it is wider
Than the star-sown vague of space.

Your logic, my friend, is perfect,
Your morals most drearily true;
But, since the earth clashed on *her* coffin,
I keep hearing that, and not you.

Console if you will, I can bear it;
'Tis a well-meant alms of breath;
But not all the preaching since Adam
Has made death other than death.

It is pagan; but wait till you feel it;
That jar of our earth, that dull shock
When the ploughshare of deeper passion
Tears down to our primitive rock.

Communion in spirit! Forgive me!
But I, who am earthy and weak,
Would give all my incomes from dreamland
For a touch of her hand on my cheek.

That little shoe in the corner,
So worn and wrinkled and brown,
With its emptiness confutes you,
And argues your wisdom down.

[*From Under the Willows.*]

JUNE.

FRANK-HEARTED hostess of the field and wood,
Gypsy, whose roof is every spreading tree,
June is the pearl of our New England year.
Still a surprisal, though expected long,
Her coming startles. Long she lies in wait,
Makes many a feint, peeps forth, draws coyly back,
Then, from some southern ambush in the sky,
With one great gush of blossom storms the world.
A week ago the sparrow was divine;
The blue-bird shifting his light load of song
From post to post along the cheerless fence,
Was as a rhymer ere the poet come:
But now, O rapture! sunshine-winged and voiced,
Pipe blown through by the warm wild breath of the West,
Shepherding his soft droves of fleecy cloud,
Gladness of woods, skies, waters all in one,
The bobolink has come, and, like the soul
Of the sweet season vocal in a bird,
Gurgles in ecstasy we know not what,
Save *June! Dear June! Now God be praised for June.*

AUF WIEDERSEHEN.

THE little gate was reached at last,
Half hid in lilacs down the lane;
She pushed it wide, and, as she past,
A wistful look she backward cast,
And said,—"*Auf wiedersehen!*"

With hand on latch, a vision white
Lingered reluctant, and again
Half doubting if she did aright,
Soft as the dews that fell that night,
She said,—"*Auf wiedersehen!*"

The lamp's clear gleam flits up the stair;
I linger in delicious pain;
Ah, in that chamber, whose rich air
To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,
Thinks she,—"*Auf wiedersehen!*"

'T is thirteen years; once more I press
The turf that silences the lane;
I hear the rustle of her dress,
I smell the lilacs, and — ah, yes,
I hear "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

Sweet piece of bashful maiden art!
The English words had seemed too fain,
But these — they drew us heart to heart,
Yet held us tenderly apart;
She said, — "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

STORM AT APPLEDORE.

How looks Appledore in a storm?
I have seen it when its crags seemed frantic,
Butting against the mad Atlantic,
When surge on surge would heap enorme,
Cliffs of emerald topped with snow,
That lifted and lifted, and then let go
A great white avalanche of thunder,
A grinding, blinding, deafening ire
Monadnock might have trembled under;
And the island, whose rock-roots pierce below
To where they are warmed with the central fire,
You could feel its granite fibres racked,
As it seemed to plunge with a shudder and thrill
Right at the breast of the swooping hill,
And to rise again snorting a cataract
Of rage-froth from every cranny and ledge,
While the sea drew its breath in hoarse and deep,
And the next vast breaker curled its edge,
Gathering itself for a mightier leap.

North, east, and south there are reefs and breakers
You would never dream of in smooth weather,
That toss and gore the sea for acres,
Bellowing and gnashing and snarling together;
Look northward, where Duck Island lies,
And over its crown you will see arise,
Against a background of slaty skies,
A row of pillars still and white,
That glimmer, and then are out of sight,
As if the moon should suddenly kiss,
While you crossed the gusty desert by night,
The long colonnades of Persepolis;
Look southward for White Island light,
The lantern stands ninety feet o'er the tide;
There is first a half-mile of tumult and fight,
Of dash and roar and tumble and fright,
And surging bewilderment wild and wide,
Where the breakers struggle left and right,
Then a mile or more of rushing sea,
And then the lighthouse slim and lone;
And whenever the weight of ocean is thrown
Full and fair on White Island head,
A great mist-jotun you will see
Lifting himself up silently
High and huge o'er the lighthouse top,
With hands of wavering spray outspread,
Groping after the little tower,
That seems to shrink and shorten and cower,
Till the monster's arms of a sudden drop,
And silently and fruitlessly
He sinks again into the sea.

You, meanwhile, where drenched you stand,
Awaken once more to the rush and roar,
And on the rock-point tighten your hand,
As you turn and see a valley deep,
That was not there a moment before,
Suck rattling down between you and a heap
Of toppling billow, whose instant fall
Must sink the whole island once for all;
Or watch the silenter, stealthier seas
Feeling their way to you more and more;
If they once should clutch you high as the knees,
They would whirl you down like a sprig of kelp,
Beyond all reach of hope or help; —
And such in a storm is Appledore.

HENRY FRANCIS LYTE.

ABIDE WITH ME.

ABIDE with me! fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me!

Not a brief glance, I beg, a passing word;
But as Thou dwelledst with Thy disciples, Lord,
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,
Come, not to sojourn, but abide with me!

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings;
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings;
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea;
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me!

Thou on my head in early youth didst smile;
And, though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, oft as I left Thee.
On to the close, O Lord, abide with me!

I need Thy presence every passing hour:
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me!

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless:
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness:
Where is Death's sting? Where Grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me!

Hold, then, Thy cross before my closing eyes!
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies!
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life and death, O Lord, abide with me!

WILLIAM HAINES LYTLE.

ANTONY TO CLEOPATRA.

I AM dying, Egypt, dying,
  Ebbs the crimson life-tide fast,
And the dark Plutonian shadows
  Gather on the evening blast;
Let thine arms, O Queen, enfold me,
  Hush thy sobs and bow thine ear;
Listen to the great heart-secrets,
  Thou, and thou alone, must hear.

Though my scarred and veteran legions
  Bear their eagles high no more,
And my wrecked and scattered galleys
  Strew dark Actium's fatal shore,
Though no glittering guards surround me,
  Prompt to do their master's will,
I must perish like a Roman,
  Die the great Triumvir still.

Let not Cæsar's servile minions
  Mock the lion thus laid low;
'T was no foeman's arm that felled him,
  'T was his own that struck the blow:
His, who pillowed on thy bosom,
  Turned aside from glory's ray,
His who, drunk with thy caresses,
  Madly threw a world away.

Should the base plebeian rabble
  Dare assail my name at Rome,
Where my noble spouse, Octavia,
  Weeps within her widowed home,
Seek her; say the gods bear witness —
  Altars, augurs, circling wings —
That her blood, with mine commingled,
  Yet shall mount the throne of kings.

As for thee, star-eyed Egyptian!
  Glorious sorceress of the Nile!
Light the path to Stygian horrors
  With the splendors of thy smile.
Give the Cæsar crowns and arches.
  Let his brow the laurel twine:
I can scorn the Senate's triumphs,
  Triumphing in love like thine.

I am dying, Egypt, dying!
  Hark ! the insulting foeman's cry.
They are coming — quick, my falchion!
  Let me front them ere I die.
Ah! no more amid the battle
  Shall my heart exulting swell;
Isis and Osiris guard thee!
  Cleopatra — Rome — farewell!

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY.

FROM THE LAY OF "HORATIUS."

Lars Porsena of Clusium,
  By the Nine Gods he swore
That the great house of Tarquin
  Should suffer wrong no more.
By the Nine Gods he swore it,
  And named a trysting-day,
And bade his messengers ride forth,
East and west and south and north,
  To summon his array.

East and west and south and north
  The messengers ride fast,
And tower and town and cottage
  Have heard the trumpet's blast.
Shame on the false Etruscan
  Who lingers in his home,
When Porsena of Clusium
  Is on the march for Rome!

The horsemen and the footmen
  Are pouring in amain
From many a stately market-place,
  From many a fruitful plain,
From many a lonely hamlet,
  Which, hid by beech and pine,
Like an eagle's nest hangs on the crest
  Of purple Apennine:

. . . . .

There be thirty chosen prophets,
  The wisest of the land,
Who always by Lars Porsena
  Both morn and evening stand.
Evening and morn the Thirty
  Have turned the verses o'er,
Traced from the right on linen white
  By mighty seers of yore;

And with one voice the Thirty
  Have their glad answer given:
"Go forth, go forth, Lars Porsena;
  Go forth, beloved of Heaven!
Go, and return in glory
  To Clusium's royal dome,
And hang round Nurscia's altars
  The golden shields of Rome!"

And now hath every city
  Sent up her tale of men;
The foot are fourscore thousand,
  The horse are thousands ten.

Before the gates of Sutrium
  Is met the great array;
A proud man was Lars Porsena
  Upon the trysting-day.

For all the Etruscan armies
  Were ranged beneath his eye,
And many a banished Roman,
  And many a stout ally;
And with a mighty following,
  To join the muster, came
The Tusculan Mamilius,
  Prince of the Latian name.

. . . . . .

Now, from the rock Tarpeian,
  Could the wan burghers spy
The line of blazing villages
  Red in the midnight sky.
The Fathers of the City,
  They sat all night and day,
For every hour some horseman came
  With tidings of dismay.

To eastward and to westward
  Have spread the Tuscan bands,
Nor house, nor fence, nor dovecote
  In Crustumerium stands.
Verbenna down to Ostia
  Hath wasted all the plain;
Astur hath stormed Janiculum,
  And the stout guards are slain.

I wis, in all the Senate
  There was no heart so bold
But sore it ached, and fast it beat,
  When that ill news was told.
Forthwith up rose the Consul,
  Up rose the Fathers all;
In haste they girded up their gowns,
  And hied them to the wall.

They held a council, standing
  Before the River-gate;
Short time was there, ye well may guess,
  For musing or debate.
Out spake the Consul roundly:
  "The bridge must straight go down;
For, since Janiculum is lost,
  Naught else can save the town."

Just then a scout came flying,
  All wild with haste and fear;
"To arms! to arms! Sir Consul;
  Lars Porsena is here."
On the low hills to westward
  The Consul fixed his eye,
And saw the swarthy storm of dust
  Rise fast along the sky.

And nearer fast and nearer
  Doth the red whirlwind come;
And louder still, and still more loud
From underneath that rolling cloud,
Is heard the trumpets' war-note proud,
  The trampling and the hum.
And plainly and more plainly
  Now through the gloom appears,
Far to left and far to right,
In broken gleams of dark-blue light,
The long array of helmets bright,
  The long array of spears.

. . . . . .

Fast by the royal standard,
  O'erlooking all the war,
Lars Porsena of Clusium
  Sat in his ivory car.
By the right wheel rode Mamilius,
  Prince of the Latian name;
And by the left false Sextus,
  That wrought the deed of shame.

But when the face of Sextus
  Was seen among the foes,
A yell that rent the firmament
  From all the town arose.
On the house-tops was no woman
  But spat towards him and hissed,
No child but screamed out curses,
  And shook its little fist.

But the Consul's brow was sad,
  And the Consul's speech was low,
And darkly looked he at the wall,
  And darkly at the foe:
"Their van will be upon us
  Before the bridge goes down;
And if they once may win the bridge,
  What hope to save the town?"

Then out spake brave Horatius,
  The Captain of the gate:
"To every man upon this earth
  Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
  Than facing fearful odds

For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods?

"And for the tender mother
Who dandled him to rest,
And for the wife who nurses
His baby at her breast,
And for the holy maidens
Who feed the eternal flame, —
To save them from false Sextus
That wrought the deed of shame?

"Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul,
With all the speed ye may;
I, with two more to help me,
Will hold the foe in play.
In yon strait path a thousand
May well be stopped by three:
Now who will stand on either hand,
And keep the bridge with me?"

Then out spake Spurius Lartius, —
A Ramnian proud was he:
"Lo, I will stand at thy right hand,
And keep the bridge with thee."
And out spake strong Herminius, —
Of Titian blood was he:
"I will abide on thy left side,
And keep the bridge with thee."

"Horatius," quoth the Consul,
"As thou sayest so let it be."
And straight against that great array
Went forth the dauntless three.
For Romans in Rome's quarrel
Spared neither land nor gold,
Nor son nor wife, nor limb nor life,
In the brave days of old.

Then none was for a party —
Then all were for the state;
Then the great man helped the poor,
And the poor man loved the great;
Then lands were fairly portioned!
Then spoils were fairly sold:
The Romans were like brothers
In the brave days of old.

Now Roman is to Roman
More hateful than a foe.
And the tribunes beard the high,
And the fathers grind the low.
As we wax hot in faction,
In battle we wax cold;
Wherefore men fight not as they fought
In the brave days of old.

Now while the three were tightening
Their harness on their backs,
The Consul was the foremost man
To take in hand an axe;
And fathers, mixed with commons,
Seized hatchet, bar, and crow,
And smote upon the planks above,
And loosed the props below,

Meanwhile the Tuscan army,
Right glorious to behold,
Came flashing back the noonday light,
Rank behind rank, like surges bright
Of a broad sea of gold.
Four hundred trumpets sounded
A peal of warlike glee,
As that great host with measured tread,
And spears advanced, and ensigns spread,
Rolled slowly towards the bridge's head,
Where stood the dauntless three.

The three stood calm and silent,
And looked upon the foes,
And a great shout of laughter
From all the vanguard rose;
And forth three chiefs came spurring
Before that deep array;
To earth they sprang, their swords they drew,
And lifted high their shields, and flew
To win the narrow way.

. . . . .

Herminius smote down Aruns;
Lartius laid Ocnus low;
Right to the heart of Lausulus
Horatius sent a blow:
"Lie there," he cried, "fell pirate!
No more, aghast and pale,
From Ostia's walls the crowd shall mark
The track of thy destroying bark;
No more Campania's hinds shall fly
To woods and caverns, when they spy
Thy thrice-accursed sail!"

But now no sound of laughter
Was heard among the foes:
A wild and wrathful clamor
From all the vanguard rose.
Six spears' length from the entrance,
Halted that mighty mass,
And for a space no man came forth
To win the narrow pass.

But, hark! the cry is Astur:
And lo! the ranks divide;
And the great lord of Luna
Comes with his stately stride.
Upon his ample shoulders
Clangs loud the fourfold shield,
And in his hand he shakes the brand
Which none but he can wield.

He smiled on those bold Romans,
A smile serene and high;
He eyed the flinching Tuscans,
And scorn was in his eye.
Quoth he, "The she-wolf's litter
Stands savagely at bay;
But will ye dare to follow,
If Astur clears the way?"

Then, whirling up his broadsword
With both hands to the height,
He rushed against Horatius,
And smote with all his might.
With shield and blade Horatius
Right deftly turned the blow.
The blow, though turned, came yet too nigh;
It missed his helm, but gashed his thigh.
The Tuscans raised a joyful cry
To see the red blood flow.

He reeled, and on Herminius
He leaned one breathing-space,
Then, like a wild-cat mad with wounds,
Sprang right at Astur's face.
Through teeth and skull and helmet
So fierce a thrust he sped,
The good sword stood a handbreadth out
Behind the Tuscan's head.

And the great lord of Luna
Fell at that deadly stroke,
As falls on Mount Avernus
A thunder-smitten oak.
Far o'er the crashing forest
The giant arms lie spread;
And the pale augurs, muttering low,
Gaze on the blasted head.

. . . .

Yet one man for one moment
Strode out before the crowd;
Well known was he to all the Three,
And they gave him greeting loud:
"Now welcome, welcome, Sextus!
Now welcome to thy home!
Why dost thou stay, and turn away?
Here lies the road to Rome."

Thrice looked he at the city;
Thrice looked he at the dead;
And thrice came on in fury,
And thrice turned back in dread;
And, white with fear and hatred,
Scowled at the narrow way
Where, wallowing in a pool of blood
The bravest Tuscans lay.

But meanwhile axe and lever
Have manfully been plied;
And now the bridge hangs tottering
Above the boiling tide.
"Come back, come back, Horatius!"
Loud cried the Fathers all —
"Back, Lartius! back, Herminius!
Back, ere the ruin fall!"

Back darted Spurius Lartius —
Herminius darted back;
And, as they passed, beneath their feet
They felt the timbers crack.
But when they turned their faces,
And on the farther shore
Saw brave Horatius stand alone,
They would have crossed once more;

But with a crash like thunder
Fell every loosened beam,
And, like a dam, the mighty wreck
Lay right athwart the stream;
And a long shout of triumph
Rose from the walls of Rome,
As to the highest turret-tops
Was splashed the yellow foam.

And like a horse unbroken,
When first he feels the rein,

The furious river struggled hard,
  And tossed his tawny mane,
And burst the curb, and bounded,
  Rejoicing to be free;
And whirling down, in fierce career,
Battlement, and plank, and pier,
  Rushed headlong to the sea.

Alone stood brave Horatius,
  But constant still in mind —
Thrice thirty thousand foes before,
  And the broad flood behind.
"Down with him!" cried false Sextus,
  With a smile on his pale face;
"Now yield thee," cried Lars Porsena,
  "Now yield thee to our grace!"

Round turned he, as not deigning
  Those craven ranks to see:
Naught spake he to Lars Porsena,
  To Sextus naught spake he;
But he saw on Palatinus
  The white porch of his home;
And he spake to the noble river
  That rolls by the towers of Rome:

"O Tiber! Father Tiber!
  To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
  Take thou in charge this day!"
So he spake, and, speaking, sheathed
  The good sword by his side,
And, with his harness on his back,
  Plunged headlong in the tide.

No sound of joy or sorrow
  Was heard from either bank,
But friends and foes in dumb surprise,
With parted lips and straining eyes,
  Stood gazing where he sank;
And when above the surges
  They saw his crest appear,
All Rome sent forth a rapturous cry,
And even the ranks of Tuscany
  Could scarce forbear to cheer.

But fiercely ran the current,
  Swollen high by months of rain;
And fast his blood was flowing;
  And he was sore in pain,
And heavy with his armor,
  And spent with changing blows;
And oft they thought him sinking,
  But still again he rose.

Never, I ween, did swimmer,
  In such an evil case,
Struggle through such a raging flood
  Safe to the landing-place;
But his limbs were borne up bravely
  By the brave heart within,
And our good father Tiber
  Bare bravely up his chin.

"Curse on him!" quoth false Sextus —
  "Will not the villain drown?
But for this stay, ere close of day
  We should have sacked the town!"
"Heaven help him!" quoth Lars Porsena,
  "And bring him safe to shore;
For such a gallant feat of arms
  Was never seen before."

And now he feels the bottom;
  Now on dry earth he stands;
Now round him throng the Fathers
  To press his gory hands;
And now, with shouts and clapping,
  And noise of weeping loud,
He enters through the River-Gate.
  Borne by the joyous crowd.

They gave him of the corn-land,
  That was of public right,
As much as two strong oxen
  Could plough from morn til night;
And they made a molten image,
  And set it up on high —
And there it stands unto this day
  To witness if I lie.

It stands in the Comitium,
  Plain for all folk to see, —
Horatius in his harness
  Halting upon one knee;
And underneath is written,
  In letters all of gold,
How valiantly he kept the bridge
  In the brave days of old.

GEORGE MACDONALD.

THE BABY.

Where did you come from, baby dear?
Out of the everywhere into here.

Where did you get those eyes so blue?
Out of the sky as I came through.

What makes the light in them sparkle and spin?
Some of the starry spikes left in.

Where did you get that little tear?
I found it waiting when I got here.

What makes your forehead so smooth and high?
A soft hand stroked it as I went by.

What makes your cheek like a warm white rose?
I saw something better than any one knows.

Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss?
Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

Where did you get this pearly ear?
God spoke, and it came out to hear.

Where did you get those arms and hands?
Love made itself into bonds and bands.

Feet, whence did you come, you darling things?
From the same box as the cherub's wings.

How did they all just come to be you?
God thought about me, and so I grew,

But how did you come to us, you dear?
God thought about you, and so I am here.

O LASSIE AYONT THE HILL.

O lassie ayont the hill!
Come ower the tap o' the hill,
Or roun' the neuk o' the hill,
For I want ye sair the nicht,
I'm needin' ye sair the nicht,
For I'm tired and sick o' mysel',
A body's sel' 's the sairest weicht, —
O lassie, come ower the hill!

Gin a body could be a thocht o' grace,
And no a sel' ava!
I'm sick o' my heid, and my han's and my face,
An' my thochts and mysel' and a' ;
I'm sick o' the warl' and a' ;
The licht gangs by wi' a hiss;
For thro' my een the sunbeams fa',
But my weary heart they miss.
O lassie ayont the hill!
Come ower the tap o' the hill,
Or roun' the neuk o' the hill;
Bidena ayont the hill!

For gin ance I saw yer bonnie heid,
And the sunlicht o' yer hair,
The ghaist o' mysel' wad fa' doun deid;
I wad be mysel' nae mair.
I wad be mysel' nae mair.
Filled o' the sole remeid;
Slain by the arrows o' licht frae yer hair,
Killed by yer body and heid.
O lassie ayont the hill, etc.

But gin ye lo'ed me ever sae sma',
For the sake o' my bonnie dame,
Whan I cam' to life, as she gaed awa',
I could bide my body and name,
I micht bide by mysel, the weary same;
  Aye setting up its heid
Till I turn frae the claes that cover my frame,
As gin they war roun' the deid.
O lassie ayont the hill, etc.

But gin ye lo'ed me as I lo'e you,
I wad ring my ain deid knell;
Mysel' wad vanish, shot through and through
Wi' the shine o' yer sunny sel',
By the licht aneath yer broo,
I wad dee to mysel', and ring my bell,
And only live in you.

O lassie ayont the hill!
Come ower the tap o' the hill,
Or roun' the neuk o' the hill,
For I want ye sair the nicht,
I'm needin' ye sair the nicht,
For I'm tired and sick o' mysel',
A body's sel' 's the sairest weicht,—
O lassie, come ower the hill!

FRANCES LAUGHTON MACE.

EASTER MORNING.

OPEN the gates of the Temple;
 Spread branches of palm and of bay;
Let not the spirits of nature
 Alone deck the Conqueror's way.
While Spring from her death-sleep arises,
 And joyous His presence awaits,
While morning's smile lights up the heavens,
 Open the Beautiful Gates.

He is here! The long watches are over,
 The stone from the grave rolled away;
"We shall sleep," was the sigh of the midnight,
 "We shall rise!" is the song of to-day.
O Music! no longer lamenting,
 On pinions of tremulous flame,
Go soaring to meet the Belovèd,
 And swell the new song of His fame!

The altar is snowy with blossoms,
 The font is a vase of perfume,
On pillar and chancel are twining
 Fresh garlands of eloquent bloom.
Christ is risen! with glad lips we utter,
 And far up the infinite height,
Archangels the pæan re-echo,
 And crown Him with Lilies of Light!

ONLY WAITING.

ONLY waiting till the shadows
 Are a little longer grown,
Only waiting till the glimmer
 Of the day's last beam is flown;
Till the night of earth is faded
 From this heart once full of day,
Till the dawn of Heaven is breaking
 Through the twilight soft and gray.

Only waiting till the reapers
 Have the last sheaf gathered home.
For the summer-time hath faded,
 And the autumn winds are come.
Quickly, reapers! gather quickly,
 The last ripe hours of my heart,
For the bloom of life is withered,
 And I hasten to depart.

Only waiting till the angels
 Open wide the mystic gate,
At whose feet I long have lingered,
 Weary, poor, and desolate.
Even now I hear their footsteps
 And their voices far away —
If they call me, I am waiting,
 Only waiting to obey.

Only waiting till the shadows
 Are a little longer grown —
Only waiting till the glimmer
 Of the day's last beam is flown.
When from out the folded darkness
 Holy, deathless stars shall rise,
By whose light, my soul will gladly
 Wing her passage to the skies.

THE HELIOTROPE.

SOMEWHERE 'tis told that in an Eastern land,
Clasped in the dull palm of a mummy's hand,
A few light seeds were found; with wondering eyes
And words of awe was lifted up the prize.

And much they marvelled what could be so dear
Of herb or flower as to be treasured here;
What sacred vow had made the dying keep
So close this token for his last, long sleep.

None ever knew, but in the fresh, warm earth
The cherished seeds sprang to a second birth,
And, eloquent once more with love and hope,
Burst into bloom the purple heliotrope,

Embalmed perhaps with sorrow's fiery tears,
Out of the silence of a thousand years
It answered back the passion of the past
With the pure breath of perfect peace at last.

O pulseless heart! as ages pass, sleep well!
The purple flower thy secret will not tell,
But only to our eager quest reply —
"Love, memory, hope, like me can never die!"

◆

CHARLES MACKAY.

THE CHILD AND THE MOURNERS.

A LITTLE child, beneath a tree,
Sat and chanted cheerily
A little song, a pleasant song,
Which was, — she sang it all day long, —
"When the wind blows the blossoms fall,
But a good God reigns over all!"

There passed a lady by the way,
Moaning in the face of day:
There were tears upon her cheek,
Grief in her heart too great to speak;
Her husband died but yester-morn,
And left her in the world forlorn.

She stopped and listened to the child,
That look'd to Heaven, and, singing, smiled;
And saw not, for her own despair,
Another lady, young and fair,
Who, also passing, stopped to hear
The infant's anthem ringing clear,

For she, but few sad days before,
Had lost the little babe she bore;
And grief was heavy at her soul,
As that sweet memory o'er her stole,
And showed how bright had been the past,
The present drear and overcast.

And as they stood beneath the tree,
Listening, soothed, and placidly,
A youth came by, whose sunken eyes,
Spake of a load of miseries;
And he, arrested like the twain,
Stopped to listen to the strain.

Death had bowed the youthful head
Of his bride beloved, his bride unwed:
Her marriage robes were fitted on,
Her fair young face with blushes shone,
When the Destroyer smote her low,
And left the lover to his woe.

And these three listened to the song
Silver-toned, and sweet, and strong,

Which that child, the livelong day,
Chanted to itself in play:
"When the wind blows, the blossoms fall,
But a good God reigns over all."

The widow's lips impulsive moved;
The mother's grief, though unreproved,
Softened, as her trembling tongue
Repeated what the infant sung;
And the sad lover, with a start,
Conned it over to his heart.

And though the child — if child it were,
And not a seraph sitting there —
Was seen no more, the sorrowing three
Went on their way resignedly,
The song still ringing in their ears —
Was it music of the spheres?

Who shall tell? They did not know.
But in the midst of deepest woe
The strain recurred when sorrow grew,
To warn them, and console them too:
"When the wind blows, the blossoms fall,
But a good God reigns over all."

CLEON AND I.

Cleon hath ten thousand acres,
  Ne'er a one have I;
Cleon dwelleth in a palace,
  In a cottage, I;
Cleon hath a dozen fortunes,
  Not a penny, I;
Yet the poorer of the twain is
  Cleon, and not I.

Cleon, true, possesseth acres,
  But the landscape, I;
Half the charms to me it yieldeth
  Money cannot buy;
Cleon harbors sloth and dulness,
  Freshening vigor, I;
He in velvet, I in fustian —
  Richer man am I.

Cleon is a slave to grandeur,
  Free as thought am I;
Cleon fees a score of doctors,
  Need of none have I;
Wealth-surrounded, care-environed,
  Cleon fears to die;
Death may come — he'll find me ready,
  Happier man am I.

Cleon sees no charms in Nature,
  In a daisy, I;
Cleon hears no anthems ringing
  'Twixt the sea and sky;
Nature sings to me forever,
  Earnest listener, I;
State for state, with all attendants —
  Who would change? — Not I.

CLEAR THE WAY!

Men of thought! be up and stirring,
    Night and day:
Sow the seed — withdraw the curtain —
    Clear the way!
Men of action, aid and cheer them,
    As ye may!
There's a fount about to stream,
There's a light about to beam,
There's a warmth about to glow,
There's a flower about to blow;
There's a midnight blackness changing
    Into gray;
Men of thought and men of action,
    Clear the way!

Once the welcome light has broken,
    Who shall say
What the unimagined glories
    Of the day?
What the evil that shall perish
    In its ray?
Aid the dawning, tongue and pen;
Aid it, hopes of honest men;
Aid it, paper — aid it, type —
Aid it, for the hour is ripe,
And our earnest must not slacken
    Into play.
Men of thought and men of action,
    Clear the way!

Lo! a cloud 's about to vanish
From the day;
And a brazen wrong to crumble
Into clay.
Lo! the Right 's about to conquer,
Clear the way!
With the Right, shall many more
Enter, smiling, at the door;
With the giant Wrong, shall fall
Many others, great and small,
That for ages long have held us
For their prey.
Men of thought and men of action,
Clear the way!

THE GOOD TIME COMING.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
We may not live to see the day,
But earth shall glisten in the ray
Of the good time coming.
Cannon-balls may aid the truth,
But thought 's a weapon stronger;
We'll win our battle by its aid;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
The pen shall supersede the sword,
And Right, not Might, shall be the lord
In the good time coming.
Worth, not Birth, shall rule mankind,
And be acknowledged stronger;
The proper impulse has been given;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
War, in all men's eyes, shall be
A monster of iniquity
In the good time coming.
Nations shall not quarrel then,
To prove which is the stronger;
Nor slaughter men for glory's sake;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
Hateful rivalries of creed
Shall not make their martyrs bleed
In the good time coming.
Religion shall be shorn of pride,
And flourish all the stronger;
And Charity shall trim her lamp;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
And a poor man's family
Shall not be his misery
In the good time coming.
Every child shall be a help,
To make his right arm stronger;
The happier he, the more he has;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
Little children shall not toil,
Under or above the soil,
In the good time coming;
But shall play in healthful fields
Till limbs and mind grow stronger;
And every one shall read and write;—
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming:
The people shall be temperate,
And shall love instead of hate,
In the good time coming.
They shall use, and not abuse,
And make all virtue stronger
The reformation has begun;
Wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, boys.
A good time coming:
Let us aid it all we can,
Every woman, every man,
The good time coming.
Smallest helps, if rightly given,
Make the impulse stronger;
'Twill be strong enough one day;—
Wait a little longer.

THE LIGHT IN THE WINDOW.

Late or early, home returning,
In the starlight or the rain,
I beheld that lonely candle
Shining from his window-pane.

Ever o'er his tattered curtain,
Nightly looking, I could scan,
Aye inditing,
Writing — writing,
The pale figure of a man;
Still discern behind him fall
The same shadow on the wall.

Far beyond the murky midnight,
By dim burning of my oil,
Filling aye his rapid leaflets,
I have watched him at his toil;
Watched his broad and seamy forehead,
Watched his white industrious hand,
Ever passing
And repassing;
Watched and strove to understand
What impelled it — gold, or fame —
Bread, or bubble of a name.

Oft I've asked, debating vainly
In the silence of my mind,
What the services he rendered
To his country or his kind;
Whether tones of ancient music,
Or the sound of modern gong,
Wisdom holy,
Humors lowly,
Sermon, essay, novel, song,
Or philosophy sublime,
Fill'd the measure of his time.

No one sought him, no one knew him,
Undistinguished was his name:
Never had his praise been uttered
By the oracles of fame.
Scanty fare and decent raiment,
Humble lodging, and a fire —
These he sought for,
These he wrought for,
And he gained his meek desire;
Teaching men by written word —
Clinging to a hope deferred.

So he lived. At last I missed him;
Still might evening twilight fall,
But no taper lit his lattice —
Lay no shadow on his wall.
In the winter of his seasons,
In the midnight of his day,
'Mid his writing,
And inditing,
Death hath beckoned him away,
Ere the sentence he had planned
Found completion at his hand.

But this man so old and nameless
Left behind him projects large,
Schemes of progress undeveloped,
Worthy of a nation's charge;
Noble fancies uncompleted,
Germs of beauty immatured,
Only needing
Kindly feeding
To have flourished and endured;
Meet reward in golden store
To have lived for evermore.

Who shall tell what schemes majestic
Perish in the active brain?
What humanity is robbed of,
Ne'er to be restored again?
What we lose, because we honor
Overmuch the mighty dead,
And dispirit
Living merit,
Heaping scorn upon its head?
Or perchance, when kinder grown,
Leaving it to die — alone?

O YE TEARS!

O ye tears! O ye tears! that have long refused to flow,
Ye are welcome to my heart — thawing, thawing, like the snow;
I feel the hard clod soften, and the early snowdrops spring,
And the healing fountains gush, and the wildernesses sing.

O ye tears! O ye tears! I am thankful that ye run;
Though ye trickle in the darkness, ye shall glitter in the sun.
The rainbow cannot shine if the rain refuse to fall,
And the eyes that cannot weep are the saddest eyes of all.

O ye tears! O ye tears! till I felt you on my cheek,
I was selfish in my sorrow, I was stubborn, I was weak.

Ye have given me strength to conquer, and I stand erect and free,
And know that I am human by the light of sympathy.

O ye tears! O ye tears! ye relieve me of my pain;
The barren rock of pride has been stricken once again:
Like the rock that Moses smote, amid Horeb's burning sand,
It yields the flowing water to make gladness in the land.

There is light upon my path, there is sunshine in my heart,
And the leaf and fruit of life shall not utterly depart;
Ye restore to me the freshness and the bloom of long ago —
O ye tears! happy tears! I am thankful that ye flow!

A QUESTION ANSWERED.

WHAT to do to make thy fame
Live beyond thee in the tomb?
And thine honorable name
Shine, a star, through history's gloom?

Seize the Spirit of thy Time,
Take the measure of his height,
Look into his eyes sublime,
And imbue thee with their light.

Know his words ere they are spoken,
And with utterance loud and clear,
Firm, persuasive, and unbroken,
Breathe them in the people's ear.

Think whate'er the Spirit thinks,
Feel thyself whate'er he feels,
Drink at fountains where he drinks,
And reveal what he reveals.

And whate'er thy medium be,
Canvas, stone, or printed sheet,
Fiction, or philosophy,
Or a ballad for the street; —

Or, perchance, with passion fraught,
Spoken words, like lightnings thrown,
Tell the people all thy thought,
And the world shall be thine own!

EXTRACT FROM "A REVERIE IN THE GRASS."

Oh, beautiful green grass! Earth-covering fair!
What shall be sung of thee, nor bright, nor rare,
Nor highly thought of? Long green grass that waves
By the wayside, over the ancient graves,
Or shoulders of the mountain looming high,
Or skulls of rocks, bald in their majesty,
Except for thee, that in the crevices
Liv'st on the nurture of the sun and breeze;
Adorner of the nude rude breast of hills,
Mantle of meadows, fringe of gushing rills,
Humblest of all the humble, thou shalt be,
If to none else, exalted unto me,
And for a time, a type of joy on earth —
Joy unobtrusive, of perennial birth,
Common as light and air, and warmth and rain,
And all the daily blessings that in vain
Woo us to gratitude: the earliest born
Of all the juicy verdures that adorn
The fruitful bosom of the kindly soil;
Pleasant to eyes that ache and limbs that toil.

Lo! as I muse, I see the bristling spears
Of thy seed-bearing stalks, which some, thy peers,
Lift o'er their fellows, nodding to and fro
Their lofty foreheads as the wild winds blow,
And think thy swarming multitudes a host,
Drawn up embattled on their native coast,
And officered for war: — the spearmen free
Raising their weapons, and the martial bee
Blowing his clarion, while some poppy tall
Displays the blood-red banner over all.

Pleased with the thought, I nurse it for a while,
And then dismiss it with a faint half-smile.
And next I fancy thee a multitude,
Moved by one breath, obedient to the mood
Of one strong thinker — the resistless wind,
That, passing o'er thee, bends thee to its mind.
See how thy blades, in myriads as they grow,
Turn ever eastward as the west winds blow —
Just as the human crowd is swayed and bent,
By some great preacher, madly eloquent,
Who moves them at his will, and with a breath
Gives them their bias both in life and death.
Or by some wondrous actor, when he draws
All eyes and hearts, amid a hushed applause,
Not to be uttered, lest delight be marred;
Or, greater still, by hymn of prophet-bard,
Who moulds the lazy present by his rhyme,
And sings the glories of a future time.

And ye are happy, green leaves, every one,
Spread in your countless thousands to the sun!
Unlike mankind, no solitary blade
Of all your verdure ever disobeyed
The law of nature: every stalk that lifts
Its head above the mould, enjoys the gifts
Of liberal heaven — the rain, the dew, the light;
And points, though humbly, to the Infinite;
And every leaf, a populous world, maintains
Invisible nations on its wide-stretched plains.
So great is littleness! the mind at fault
Betwixt the peopled leaf and starry vault,
Doubts which is grandest, and, with holy awe,
Adores the God who made them, and whose law
Upholds them in Eternity or Time,
Greatest and least, ineffably sublime.

TELL ME, YE WINGÈD WINDS.

TELL me, ye wingèd winds,
  That round my pathway roar,
Do ye not know some spot
  Where mortals weep no more?
Some lone and pleasant dell,
  Some valley in the west,
Where, free from toil and pain,
  The weary soul may rest?
The loud wind dwindled to a whisper low,
And sighed for pity as it answered, "No."

Tell me, thou mighty deep,
  Whose billows round me play,
Know'st thou some favored spot,
  Some island far away,
Where weary man may find
  The bliss for which he sighs, —
Where sorrow never lives,
  And friendship never dies?
The loud waves, rolling in perpetual flow,
Stopped for a while, and sighed to answer, — "No."

And thou, serenest moon,
  That, with such lovely face,
Dost look upon the earth,
  Asleep in night's embrace;
Tell me, in all thy round
  Hast thou not seen some spot
Where miserable man
  May find a happier lot?
Behind a cloud the moon withdrew in woe,
And a voice, sweet but sad, responded, — "No."

Tell me, my secret soul,
Oh! tell me, Hope and Faith,
Is there no resting-place
From sorrow, sin, and death?
Is there no happy spot
Where mortals may be blest,
Where grief may find a balm,
And weariness a rest?
Faith, Hope, and Love, best boons to mortals given,
Waved their bright wings, and whispered, — "Yes, in heaven."

ANDREW MARVELL.

A DROP OF DEW.

See how the orient dew,
Shed from the bosom of the morn
Into the blowing roses,
(Yet careless of its mansion new
For the clear region where 'twas born)
Round in itself incloses,
And in its little globe's extent
Frames, as it can, its native element.
How it the purple flower does slight,
Scarce touching where it lies;
But gazing back upon the skies,
Shines with a mournful light,
Like its own tear,
Because so long divided from the sphere.
Restless it rolls, and unsecure,
Trembling, lest it grow impure;
Till the warm sun pities its pain,
And to the skies exhales it back again.
So the soul, that drop, that ray,
Of the clear fountain of eternal day,
Could it within the human flower be seen,
Remembering still its former height,
Shuns the sweet leaves and blossoms green,
And, recollecting its own light,
Does, in its pure and circling thoughts, express
The greater heaven in a heaven less.
In how coy a figure wound,
Every way it turns away;
So the world excluding round,
Yet receiving in the day.
Dark beneath, but bright above;
Here disdaining, there in love.
How loose and easy hence to go!
How girt and ready to ascend!
Moving but on a point below,
It all about does upward bend.
Such did the manna's sacred dew distil,
White and entire, although congealed and chill —
Congealed on earth, but does, dissolving, run
Into the glories of th' almighty sun.

GERALD MASSEY.

JERUSALEM THE GOLDEN.

Jerusalem the Golden!
I weary for one gleam
Of all thy glory folden
In distance and in dream!
My thoughts, like palms in exile,
Climb up to look and pray
For a glimpse of thy dear country
That lies so far away.

Jerusalem the Golden!
Methinks each flower that blows,
And every bird a-singing
Of thee, some secret knows;
I know not what the flowers
Can feel, or singers see;
But all these summer raptures
Seem prophecies of thee.

Jerusalem the Golden!
When sunset's in the west,
It seems the gate of glory,
Thou city of the blest!
And midnight's starry torches
Through intermediate gloom
Are waving with our welcome
To thy eternal home!

Jerusalem the Golden!
When loftily they sing,
O'er pain and sorrow olden
Forever triumphing;
Lowly may be the portal,
And dark may be the door,
The mansion is immortal —
God's palace for his poor!

Jerusalem the Golden!
There all our birds that flew —
Our flowers but half unfolden,
Our pearls that turned to dew,
And all the glad life-music
Now heard no longer here,
Shall come again to greet us
As we are drawing near.

Jerusalem the Golden!
I toil on day by day;
Heart-sore each night with longing,
I stretch my hands and pray,
That mid thy leaves of healing
My soul may find her nest;
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
The weary are at rest!

THE KINGLIEST KINGS.

Ho! ye who in the noble work
Win scorn, as flames draw air,
And in the way where lions lurk
God's image bravely bear;
Ho! trouble-tried and torture torn,
The kingliest kings are crowned with thorn.

Life's glory, like the bow in heaven,
Still springeth from the cloud;
And soul ne'er soared the starry seven,
But pain's fire-chariot rode.
They've battled best who've boldest borne;
The kingliest kings are crowned with thorn.

The martyr's fire-crown on the brow
Doth into glory burn;
And tears that from Love's torn heart flow,
To pearls of spirit turn.
Our dearest hopes in pangs are born;
The kingliest kings are crowned with thorn.

As beauty in death's cerement shrouds,
And stars bejewel night,
God's splendors live in dim heart-clouds,
And suffering worketh might.
The mirkest hour is mother o' morn;
The kingliest kings are crowned with thorn.

AND THOU HAST STOLEN A JEWEL.

And thou hast stolen a jewel, Death,
Shall light thy dark up like a star.
A beacon kindling from afar
Our light of love, and fainting faith.

Through tears it gleams perpetually,
And glitters through the thickest glooms,
Till the eternal morning comes
To light us o'er the jasper sea.

With our best branch in tenderest leaf,
We've strewn the way our Lord doth come;
And, ready for the harvest home,
His reapers bind our ripest sheaf.

Our beautiful bird of light hath fled:
Awhile she sat with folded wings —
Sang round us a few hoverings —
Then straightway into glory sped.

And white-winged angels nurture her;
With heaven's white radiance robed and crowned,
And all love's purple glory round,
She summers on the hills of myrrh.

Through childhood's morning-land, serene
She walked betwixt us twain, like love;
While, in a robe of light above,
Her better angel walked unseen, —

Till life's highway broke bleak and wild;
Then, lest her starry garments trail
In mire, heart bleed, and courage fail,
The angel's arms caught up the child.

Her wave of life hath backward rolled
To the great ocean; on whose shore
We wander up and down, to store
Some treasures of the times of old: —

And aye we seek and hunger on
For precious pearls and relics rare,
Strewn on the sands for us to wear
At heart for love of her that's gone.

O weep no more! there yet is balm
In Gilead! Love doth ever shed
Rich healing where it nestles — spread
O'er desert pillows some green palm!

Strange glory streams through life's wild rents;
And through the open door of death
We see the heaven that beckoneth
To the belovèd going hence.

God's ichor fills the hearts that bleed;
The best fruit loads the broken bough;
And in the wounds our sufferings plough,
Immortal love sows sovereign seed.

DENIS FLORENCE McCARTHY.

SUMMER LONGINGS.

Ah! my heart is weary waiting;
Waiting for the May.—
Waiting for the pleasant rambles,
Where the fragrant hawthorn brambles,
With the woodbine alternating,
Scent the dewy way.
Ah! my heart is weary waiting,—
Waiting for the May.

Ah! my heart is sick with longing,
Longing for the May,—
Longing to escape from study,
To the young face fair and ruddy,
And the thousand charms belonging
To the summer's day.
Ah! my heart is sick with longing,
Longing for the May.

Ah! my heart is sore with sighing,
Sighing for the May,—
Sighing for their sure returning,
When the summer beams are burning,
Hopes and flowers that, dead or dying,
All the winter lay.
Ah! my heart is sore with sighing,
Sighing for the May.

Ah! my heart is pained with throbbing,
Throbbing for the May,—
Throbbing for the seaside billows,
Or the water-wooing willows;
Where, in laughing and in sobbing,
Glide the streams away.
Ah! my heart, my heart is throbbing,
Throbbing for the May.

Waiting sad, dejected, weary,
Waiting for the May:
Spring goes by with wasted warnings;
Moonlit evenings, sunbright mornings,—
Summer comes, yet dark and dreary
Life still ebbs away;
Man is ever weary, weary,
Waiting for the May!

NICHOLAS MICHELL.

PERSIA.

PERSIA! time-honored land! who looks on thee
A desert, yet a Paradise, will see,
Vast chains of hills where not a shrub appears,
Wastes where the dews distil their diamond tears;
The only living things foul birds of prey,
That whet their beaks, or court the solar ray,
And wolves that fill with howlings midnight's vale,
Turning the cheek of far-off traveller pale; —
Anon, the ravished eye delighted dwells
On chinar-groves and brightly-watered dells.
Blooming where man and art have nothing done,
Pomegranates hang their rich fruit in the sun;
Grapes turn to purple many a rock's tall brow,
And globes of gold adorn the citron's bough;
Mid rose-trees hid, or perched on some high palm.
The bulbul sings through eve's delicious calm;
While girt by planes, or washed by cooling streams,
On some green flat the stately city gleams, —
'Tis as a demon there had cast his frown,
And here an angel breathed a blessing down;
As if in nature as the human soul,
The god of darkness spurned heaven's bright control,
Good struggling hard with Evil's withering spell,
A smiling Eden on the marge of hell.
Immortal clime! where Zoroaster sprung,
And light on Persia's earlier history flung;
Let charity condemn not Iran's sage,
Who taught, reformed, and humanized his age.
In him one great as Mecca's prophet, see,
But oh, more gentle, wise, and pure than he.

ALEXANDER AT PERSEPOLIS.

HERE, too, came one who bartered all for power,
The dread Napoleon of earth's younger hour:
Ay, the same spot we calmly muse on now
Saw chiefs and kings to Alexander bow;
A conqueror, — yes, men praise and bend the knee;
Who spreads most woe, the greatest hero he.
But lo! that night on fancy casts its gloom,
That fearful night of revelry and doom,
When perished all things costly, bright, and fair,
And left, as now, these pillars stern and bare.
The feast is spread; around the monarch shine
Those earth-born pomps weak mortals deem divine;
High sits he on his throne of gems and gold,
Bright-starred and purple robes his limbs enfold;
No crown adorns his brow, for festive hours
Have wreathed his head with Bacchus' bloomy flowers;
Lamps, hung in silver chains, a softened glow
Shed on the warrior chiefs that group below.
There prince and noble round the board are met,
Who fought those fights embalmed in history yet;

But thoughts of slaughter past, and blood-stained fields,
Mar not the joys that gorgeous banquet yields;
Sparkles in cups of gold rich Cyprian wine,
Melts the Greek fig, the grapes of Ora shine;
Pears from fair Bactria vie with Kerman's peach,
And fruit from climes e'en Greeks have failed to reach —
Hot Indian Isles, to Scythia's mountain snows, —
Each luscious orb on plates of crystal glows.
Hark! in the gilded gallery, flute and lyre!
Strains soft as sighs of streaming love respire;
Then harp and sackbut bolder notes ring out,
Like victory's pæan o'er some army's rout.
And thus they revel; mirth and joy control
The sterner thoughts, the high aspiring soul;
And e'en the slaves, in sumptuous garments dressed,
Forget their toils to see their lords so blessed.

But what young beauty leans beside the king,
With form so graceful, air so languishing?
While other maids are glittering down that hall,
A moon mid earth's sweet stars, she dims them all.
Her mask is off, unveiled her radiant head,
A lovelier veil those flower-bound tresses spread;
A spangled zone her Grecian robe confines,
Bright on her breast a costly diamond shines,
But oh, more bright, that eye's entrancing ray
Melts where it falls, and steals the soul away!
Who looks must look again, and sighing own
Earth boasts, than tyrant Love's, no mightier throne:
Woman was born to vanquish, — Lo, the brave,
The nation-trampler, bowed, her veriest slave;
Yes, beauteous Thais, with Love's flag unfurled,
Conquered the blood-stained conqueror of the world!

THE PARADISE OF CABUL.

Oh, who Cabul's sweet region may behold,
When spring laughs out, or autumn sows her gold,
The meadows, orchards, streams that glide in light,
Nor deem lost Irem charms again his sight:
That wondrous garden rivalling Eden's bloom,
Too blessed for man to view, this side the tomb?
Flowers here, of every scent and form and dye,
Lift their bright heads, and laugh upon the sky,
From the tall tulip with her rich streaked bell,
Where throned in state, Queen Mab is proud to dwell,
To lowly wind-flowers gaudier plants eclipse,
And pensile harebells with their dewy lips.
There turns the heliotrope to court the sun,
And up green stalks the starry jasmines run:
The hyacinth in tender pink outvies
Beauty's soft cheek, and violets match her eyes;
Sweet breathe the henna flowers that harem girls
So love to twine among their glossy curls;
And here the purple pansy springs to birth,
Like some gay insect rising from the earth.

One sheet of bloom the level greensward yields,
And simple daisies speak of England's fields;
Drawn by sweet odor's spell, in humming glee,
Flits round the gloomy stock, the robber-bee,
While to the gorgeous musk-rose, all night long,
The love-sick bulbul pours his melting song;
Then, too, the fruits through months that hang and glow.
Tempting as those which wrought our mother's woe.
Soft shines the mango on its stem so tall,
Rich gleams beneath, the melon's golden ball;
How feasts the eye upon the bell-shaped pear!
Bright cherries look like corals strung in air;
The purple plum, the grape the hand may reach,
Vie with the downy-skinned and blushing peach;
Though small, its place the luscious strawberry claims,
Mid snowy flowers the radiant orange flames;
To quench the thirst the cooling guava see,
And ripe pomegranates melting on the tree.
And here, too, England's favorite fruit is seen,
The red-cheeked apple, veiled by leaves of green:
Ah! at the sight, sweet thoughts of home awake,
And foreign lands are welcomed for its sake.
  Thrice genial clime! O favored sweet Cabul!
Well art thou named the blessed, the beautiful!
With snow-peaked hills around thee, —guarding arms!
Ah! would thy sons were worthy of thy charms!

WILLIAM JULIUS MICKLE.

THE SAILOR'S WIFE.

AND are ye sure the news is true?
  And are ye sure he's weel?
Is this a time to think o' wark?
  Ye jades, lay by your wheel;
Is this the time to spin a thread,
  When Colin's at the door?
Reach down my cloak, I'll to the quay,
  And see him come ashore.
For there's nae luck about the house,
  There's nae luck at a';
There's little pleasure in the house
  When our gudeman's awa'.

And gie to me my bigonet,
  My bishop's-satin gown;
For I maun tell the baillie's wife
  That Colin's in the town.
My Turkey slippers maun gae on
  My stockin's pearly blue;
It's a' to pleasure our gudeman,
  For he's baith leal and true.

Rise, lass, and mak' a clean fireside,
  Put on the muckle pot;
Gie little Kate her button gown,
  And Jock his Sunday coat;
And mak' their shoon as black as slaes,
  Their hose as white as snaw;
It's a' to please my ain gudeman,
  For he's been long awa'.

There's twa fat hens upo' the coop
  Been fed this month and mair;
Mak' haste and thraw their necks about,
  That Colin weel may fare;
And spread the table neat and clean,
  Gar ilka thing look braw,

For wha can tell how Colin fared
When he was far awa'?

Sae true his heart, sae smooth his speech,
His breath like caller air;
His very foot has music in't
As he comes up the stair, —
And will I see his face again?
And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
In troth I'm like to greet!

If Colin's weel, and weel content,
I hae nae mair to crave:
And gin I live to keep him sae
I'm blest aboon the lave:
And will I see his face again?
And will I hear him speak?
I'm downright dizzy wi' the thought,
In troth I'm like to greet.
For there's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck at a';
There's little pleasure in the house
When our gudeman's awa'.

ABRAHAM PERRY MILLER.

[*From Consolation.*]

REFUGE FROM DOUBT.

O LOVING God of Nature! who through all
Hast never yet betrayed me to a fall, —
While following creeds of men I went astray,
And in distressing mazes lost my way;
But turning back to Thee, I found Thee true,
And sweet as woman's love, and fresh as dew, —
Henceforth on Thee, and Thee alone I rest,
Nor warring sects shall tear me from Thy breast.
While others doubt and wrangle o'er their creeds,
I rest in Thee and satisfy my needs.

[*From Consolation.*]

TURN TO THE HELPER.

As when a little child returned from play,
Finds the door closed and latched across its way,
Against the door, with infant push and strain,
It gathers all its strength and strives in vain!
Unseen, within, a loving father stands
And lifts the iron latch with easy hands;
Then, as he lightly draws the door aside,
He hides behind it, while with baby pride, —
And face aglow, in struts the little one,
Flushed and rejoiced to think what it has done, —
So, when men find, across life's rugged way,
Strong doors of trouble barred from day to day,
And strive with all their power of knees and hands,
Unseen within the heavenly Father stands,
And lifts each iron latch, while men pass through,
Flushed and rejoiced to think what they can do!

Turn to the Helper, unto whom thou art
More near and dear than to thy mother's heart, —
Who is more near to thee than is the blood
That warms thy bosom with its purple flood —
Who by a word can change the mental state
And make a burden light, however great!
O loving Power! that, dwelling deep within,
Consoles our spirits in their woe and sin, —

When days were dark and all the world went wrong,
Nor any heart was left for prayer and song, —
When bitter memory, o'er and o'er again,
Revolved the wrongs endured from fellow-men;
And showed how hopes decayed and bore no fruit,
And He who placed us here was deaf and mute! —
If then we turned on God in angry wise,
And scorned his dealings with reproachful eyes
Questioned his goodness, and in foolish wrath,
Called hope a lie and ridiculed our faith, —
Did we not find, in such an evil hour,
That far within us dwelt this loving Power?
No wrathful God within, to smite us down,
Or turn his face away with angry frown;
But in the bitter heart, a smile began,
Grew, all at once, within, and upward ran,
Broke out upon the face — and, for awhile,
Despite all bitterness, we had to smile!
Because God's spirit that within us lay,
Simply rose up, and smiled our wrath away!
This love endures through all things, without end,
And every soul has one Almighty Friend,
Whose angels watch and tend it from its birth,
And heaven becomes the servant of the earth!
Whate'er befall, our spirits live and move
In one vast ocean of Eternal Love!

[*From Consolation.*]

KEEP FAITH IN LOVE.

Keep faith in Love, the cure of every curse —
The strange, sweet wonder of the universe!
God loves a lover, and while time shall roll,
This wonder, Love, shall save the human soul.
Love is the heart's condition: youth and age
Alike are subject to its tender rage:
Age crowns the head with venerable snow,
But Life and Love forever mated go;
Along life's far frontier, the aged move,
One foot beyond, and nothing left but Love!
And when the soul its mortal fears resigns,
The perfect world of love around it shines!

◆

JOHN MILTON.

ON TIME.

Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race,
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain.
For when as each thing bad thou hast entombed,
And last of all thy greedy self consumed,
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood,

When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With truth, and peace, and love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of him, to whose happy-making sight alone
When once our heavenly-guided soul shall climb,
Then, all this earthy grossness quit,
Attired with stars, we shall forever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time.

L'ALLEGRO.

Hence, loathèd Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night raven sings;
There under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In Heaven ycleped Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth
With two sister Graces more
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore;
Or whether (as some sages sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks, and wreathèd smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek,
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe,
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty
And, if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprovèd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine
Or the twisted eglantine;
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Some time walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,
Robed in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman near at hand
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
Whilst the landskip round it measures;
Russet lawns and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
Mountains on whose barren breast
The laboring clouds do often rest,

Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks and rivers wide.
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighboring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage-chimney smokes,
From betwixt two agèd oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,
Are at their savory dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phyllis dresses:
And then in haste her bower, she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes, with secure delight,
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth, and many a maid
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail;
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Fairy Mab the junkets eat;
She was pinched and pulled, she said,
And he by friar's lanthorn led;
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail had threshed the corn,
That ten day-laborers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length.
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With masque and antique pageantry,
Such sights as youthful poets dream,
On summer eves, by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learnèd sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever against eating cares
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the melting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO.

HENCE, vain deluding joys,
The brood of folly, without father bred!
How little you bestead,
Or fill the fixèd mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain.

And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail, thou goddess, sage and holy!
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue:
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen, that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea-nymphs, and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended;
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she (in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain).
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cypress lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast,
Thou fix them on the earth as fast;
And join with thee calm peace and quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with Gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
But first and chiefest with thee bring,
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er the accustomed oak;
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chantress, oft the woods among,
I woo to hear thy even-song;
And missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heavens' wide pathless way;
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a plat of rising ground
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar.
Or if the air will not permit,
Some still, removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen on some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds, or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook;
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,

Whose power hath a true consent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age,
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
But, O sad virgin! that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower,
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made hell grant what love did seek;
Or call up him that left half told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass;
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of tourneys and of trophies hung;
Of forests and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
'Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not tricked and frounced as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kerchiefed in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heavèd stroke
Was never heard, the Nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honeyed thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered sleep:
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid:
And as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antic pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced choir below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

SONG ON MAY MORNING.

Now the bright morning star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose.

Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
Mirth and youth and warm desire;
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

STANZAS FROM "HYMN ON THE NATIVITY."

It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to Him
Had doffed her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw,
Confounded that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But He, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She, crowned with olives green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing,
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high up hung,
The hookèd chariot stood,
Unstained with hostile blood,
The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng,
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovereign Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds with wonder whist
Smoothly the waters kissed,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmèd wave.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning chide;
"Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"
I fondly ask: but Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait."

ON REACHING TWENTY-THREE.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom sheweth.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arrived so near,
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits indu'th.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-master's eye.

TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY.

Lady, that in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shunned the broad way and the green,
And with those few art eminently seen,
That labor up the hill of heavenly truth,
The better part with Mary and with Ruth
Chosen thou hast; and they that overween,
And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth.
Thy care is fixed, and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure
Thou, when the bridegroom with his feastful friends
Passes to bliss at the mid-hour of night,
Hast gained thy entrance, virgin wise and pure.

[*From Paradise Lost.*]

THE BOWER OF ADAM AND EVE.

The roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade,
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf: on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine
Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought
Mosaic: under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broidered the ground, more colored than with stone
Of costliest emblem. Other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none:
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower
More sacred and sequestered, though but feigned,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor nymph
Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espousèd Eve decked first her nuptial bed,
And heavenly choirs the Hymenæan sung,
What day the genial angel to our sire
Brought her in naked beauty more adorned,
More lovely than Pandora, whom the gods

Endowed with all their gifts: and oh! too like
In sad event, when to the unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared
Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

[*From Paradise Lost.*]

APOSTROPHE TO LIGHT.

Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born,
Or of the Eternal, co-eternal beam,
May I express thee unblamed? since God is Light,
And never but in unapproachèd light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hearest thou rather, pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight
Through utter and through middle darkness borne
With other notes than, to the Orphean lyre,
I sung of Chaos and eternal night,
Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to reascend,
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovereign vital lamp: but thou
Revisitest not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veiled. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
Those other two equalled with me in fate,
So were I equalled with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides.

DAVID MACBETH MOIR.

STANZAS FROM "CASA WAPPY." *

Thy bright brief day knew no decline —
'T was cloudless joy;
Sunrise and night alone were thine,
Belovèd boy!
This morn beheld thee blithe and gay;
That found thee prostrate in decay:
And ere a third shone, clay was clay,
Casa Wappy!

Gem of our heart, our household pride,
Earth's undefiled,
Could love have saved, thou hadst not died,
Our dear, sweet child!
Humbly we bow to Fate's decree;
Yet had we hoped that Time should see
Thee mourn for us, not us for thee,
Casa Wappy!

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* The pet name of Moir's son.

. . . . .

Methinks thou smil'st before me now,
With glance of stealth;
The hair thrown back from thy full brow
In buoyant health;
I see thine eyes' deep violet light,
Thy dimpled cheek carnationed bright,
Thy clasping arms so round and white,
Casa Wappy!

The nursery shows thy pictured wall,
Thy bat, thy bow,
Thy cloak and bonnet, club and ball,
But where art thou?
A corner holds thine empty chair;
Thy playthings, idly scattered there,
But speak to us of our despair,
Casa Wappy!

Even to the last, thy every word —
To glad — to grieve —
Was sweet as sweetest song of bird
On summer's eve;
In outward beauty undecayed,
Death o'er thy spirit cast no shade,
And, like the rainbow, thou didst fade,
Casa Wappy!

We mourn for thee, when blind, blank night
The chamber fills;
We pine for thee, when morn's first light
Reddens the hills;
The sun, the moon, the stars, the sea,
All — to the wall-flower and wild pea —
Are changed; we saw the world through thee,
Casa Wappy!

And though, perchance, a smile may gleam
Of casual mirth,
It doth not own, whate'er may seem,
An inward birth;
We miss thy small step on the stair;—
We miss thee at thine evening prayer:
All day we miss thee — everywhere—
Casa Wappy!

Snows muffled earth when thou didst go,
In life's spring bloom,
Down to the appointed house below—
The silent tomb.
But now the green leaves of the tree,
The cuckoo, and the busy bee,
Return — but with them bring not thee,
Casa Wappy!

. . . .

Farewell then — for a while farewell —
Pride of my heart!
It cannot be that long we dwell,
Thus torn apart.
Time's shadows like the shuttle flee;
And, dark howe'er life's night may be,
Beyond the grave I'll meet with thee,
Casa Wappy!

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

LOVE OF COUNTRY AND OF HOME.

THERE is a land, of every land the pride,
Beloved by heaven, o'er all the world beside;
Where brighter suns dispense serener light,
And milder moons emparadise the night:
A land of beauty, virtue, valor, truth,
Time-tutored age and love-exalted youth:

The wandering mariner, whose eye explores
The wealthiest isles, the most enchanting shores,
Views not a realm so bountiful and fair,
Nor breathes the spirit of a purer air;
In every clime the magnet of his soul,
Touched by remembrance, trembles to that pole;
For in this land of heaven's peculiar grace,
The heritage of nature's noblest race,
There is a spot of earth supremely blest,
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest:
Where man, creation's tyrant, casts aside
His sword and sceptre, pageantry and pride,
While in his softened looks benignly blend
The sire, the son, the husband, father, friend:
Here woman reigns; the mother, daughter, wife,
Strews with fresh flowers the narrow way of life;
In the clear heaven of her delightful eye,
An angel-guard of loves and graces lie;
Around her knees domestic duties meet,
And fireside pleasures gambol at her feet.
"Where shall that *land*, that *spot of earth* be found?"
Art thou a man? — a patriot? — look around;
Oh, thou shalt find, howe'er thy footsteps roam.
That land THY COUNTRY, and that spot THY HOME!"

PRAYER.

PRAYER is the soul's sincere desire
Uttered or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air;
His watchword at the gates of death;
He enters heaven by prayer.

Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice
Returning from his ways;
While angels in their songs rejoice,
And say, "Behold, he prays!"

The saints in prayer appear as one,
In word, and deed, and mind,
When with the Father and his Son
Their fellowship they find.

Nor prayer is made on earth alone;
The Holy Spirit pleads;
And Jesus, on the eternal throne,
For sinners intercedes.

O Thou, by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way,
The path of prayer Thyself hath trod;
Lord, teach us how to pray!

THE COMMON LOT.

ONCE, in the flight of ages past,
There lived a man; and who was he?
Mortal! howe'er thy lot be cast,
That man resembled thee.

Unknown the region of his birth,
The land in which he died unknown:
His name has perished from the earth,
This truth survives alone:

That joy, and grief, and hope, and fear,
Alternate triumphed in his breast;
His bliss and wo — a smile, a tear!
Oblivion hides the rest.

The bounding pulse, the languid limb,
The changing spirits' rise and fall;
We know that these were felt by him,
For these are felt by all.

He suffered — but his pangs are o'er;
Enjoyed — but his delights are fled;
Had friends — his friends are now no more;
And foes — his foes are dead.

He loved — but whom he loved the grave
Hath lost in its unconscious womb:
Oh, she was fair! but naught could save
Her beauty from the tomb.

He saw whatever thou hast seen:
Encountered all that troubles thee;
He was — whatever thou hast been;
He is — what thou shall be.

The rolling seasons — day and night,
Sun, moon, and stars, the earth and main,
Erewhile his portion, life and light,
To him exist in vain.

The clouds and sunbeams, o'er his eye
That once their shades and glory threw,
Have left in yonder silent sky
No vestige where they flew.

The annals of the human race,
Their ruins, since the world began,
Of him afford no other trace
Than this — there lived a man!

ASPIRATIONS OF YOUTH.

HIGHER, higher will we climb,
Up to the mount of glory,
That our names may live through time
In our country's story:
Happy when her welfare calls,
He who conquers, he who falls.

Deeper, deeper, let us toil
In the mines of knowledge:
Nature's wealth and learning's spoil
Win from school and college;
Delve we there for richer gems
Than the stars of diadems.

Onward, onward may we press
Through the path of duty;
Virtue is true happiness,
Excellence, true beauty.
Minds are of celestial birth;
Make we then a heaven of earth.

Closer, closer let us knit
Hearts and hands together,
Where our fireside comforts sit
In the wildest weather;
Oh! they wander wide who roam,
For the joys of life, from home.

FRIEND AFTER FRIEND DEPARTS.

FRIEND after friend departs;
Who hath not lost a friend?
There is no union here of hearts
That finds not here an end:
Were this frail world our final rest,
Living or dying, none were blest.

Beyond this flight of time —
Beyond the reign of death, —
There surely is some blessèd clime
Where life is not a breath;
Nor life's affections transient fire,
Whose sparks fly upward and expire.

There is a world above
Where parting is unknown:
A long eternity of love,
Formed for the good alone:
And faith beholds the dying, here,
Translated to that glorious sphere!

Thus star by star declines,
Till all are past away,
As morning high and higher shines,
To pure and perfect day;
Nor sink those stars in empty night,
But hide themselves in heaven's own light.

FOR EVER WITH THE LORD.

"For ever with the Lord!"
  Amen! so let it be:
Life from the dead is in that word:
  'T is immortality!

My Father's house on high,
  Home of my soul! how near,
At times, to faith's aspiring eye,
  Thy golden gates appear!

"For ever with the Lord!"
  Father, if 't is Thy will,
The promise of Thy gracious word,
  Even here to me fulfil.

Be Thou at my right hand:
  So shall I never fail;
Uphold Thou me and I shall stand;
  Help, and I shall prevail.

So, when my latest breath
  Shall rend the veil in twain,
By death I shall escape from death,
  And life eternal gain.

Knowing "as I am known,"
  How shall I love that word,
And oft repeat before the throne,
  "For ever with the Lord."

THOMAS MOORE.

[*From Lalla Rookh.*]

ESTRANGEMENT THROUGH TRIFLES.

Alas — how light a cause may move
Dissension between hearts that love!
Hearts that the world in vain had tried
And sorrow but more closely tied;
That stood the storm, when waves were rough,
Yet in a sunny hour fall off,
Like ships, that have gone down at sea,
When heaven was all tranquillity!
A something light as air — a look,
  A word unkind or wrongly taken —
Oh! love that tempests never shook,
  A breath, a touch like this hath shaken.
And ruder words will soon rush in
To spread the breach that words begin;
And eyes forget the gentle ray
They wore in courtship's smiling day;
And voices lose the tone that shed
A tenderness round all they said;
Till fast declining, one by one,
The sweetnesses of love are gone,
And hearts, so lately mingled, seem
Like broken clouds,— or like the stream,
That smiling left the mountain's brow,
  As though its waters ne'er could sever,
Yet e'er it reached the plain below,
  Breaks into floods that part forever.

O you, that have the charge of love,
  Keep him in rosy bondage bound!
As in the fields of bliss above
  He sits, with flowerets fettered round;
Loose not a tie that round him clings,
Nor ever let him use his wings
For even an hour, a minute's flight
Will rob the plumes of half their light.
Like that celestial bird,— whose nest
  Is found beneath far eastern skies,
Whose wings, though radiant when at rest,
  Lose all their glory when he flies.

[*From Lalla Rookh.*]

RECOGNITION OF A CONGENIAL SPIRIT.

Oh! there are looks and tones that dart
An instant sunshine through the heart,—

As if the soul that minute caught
Some treasure it through life had sought;

As if the very lips and eyes
Predestined to have all our sighs,
And never be forgot again,
Sparkled and spoke before us then.

So came thy every glance and tone,
When first on me they breathed and shone
New, as if brought from other spheres,
Yet welcome as if loved for years!

THE BIRD LET LOOSE.

The bird, let loose in eastern skies,
When hastening fondly home,
Ne'er stoops to earth her wing, nor flies
Where idle warblers roam;
But high she shoots through air and light,
Above all low delay,
Where nothing earthly bounds her flight,
Nor shadow dims her way.

So grant me, God, from every care,
And stain of passion free,
Aloft, through Virtue's purer air,
To hold my course to Thee!
No sin to cloud — no lure to stay
My soul, as home she springs; —
Thy sunshine on her joyful way;
Thy freedom in her wings!

OFT IN THE STILLY NIGHT.

Oft in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Fond memory brings the light
Of other days around me:
The smiles, the tears,
Of boyhood's years,
The words of love then spoken;
The eyes that shone,
Now dimmed and gone,
The cheerful hearts now broken.
Thus in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

When I remember all
The friends so linked together
I've seen around me fall,
Like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one
Who treads alone
Some banquet-hall deserted,
Whose lights are fled,
Whose garlands dead,
And all but he departed.
Thus in the stilly night,
Ere slumber's chain has bound me,
Sad memory brings the light
Of other days around me.

O THOU WHO DRY'ST THE MOURNER'S TEAR.

O thou who dry'st the mourner's tear!
How dark this world would be,
If, when deceived and wounded here,
We could not fly to Thee.
The friends, who in our sunshine live,
When winter comes, are flown:
And he, who has but tears to give,
Must weep those tears alone.
But Thou wilt heal that broken heart,
Which, like the plants that throw
Their fragrance from the wounded part,
Breathes sweetness out of woe.

When joy no longer soothes or cheers,
And e'en the hope that threw
A moment's sparkle o'er our tears,
Is dimmed and vanished too!
Oh! who would bear life's stormy doom,
Did not Thy wing of love
Come, brightly wafting through the gloom
Our peace-branch from above?

Then sorrow, touched by Thee, grows bright
With more than rapture's ray;
As darkness shows us worlds of light
We never saw by day!

I SAW FROM THE BEACH.

I saw from the beach, when the morning was shining,
A bark o'er the waters move gloriously on;
I came when the sun o'er that beach was declining,
The bark was still there, but the waters were gone.

And such is the fate of our life's early promise,
So passing the spring-tide of joy we have known;
Each wave that we danced on at morning, ebbs from us,
And leaves us, at eve, on the bleak shore alone.

Ne'er tell me of glories serenely adorning
The close of our day, the calm eve of our night:—
Give me back, give me back the wild freshness of morning,
Her clouds and her tears are worth evening's best light.

Oh, who would not welcome that moment's returning,
When passion first waked a new life through his frame?
And his soul,—like the wood that grows precious in burning;
Gave out all its sweets to love's exquisite flame!

COME, YE DISCONSOLATE.

Come, ye disconsolate, where'er you languish,
Come, at the shrine of God fervently kneel;
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish—
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal.

Joy of the desolate, light of the straying,
Hope, when all others die, fadeless and pure,
Here speaks the Comforter, in God's name saying,
"Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot cure."

Go, ask the infidel what boon he brings us,
What charm for aching hearts he can reveal,
Sweet as that heavenly promise Hope sings to us—
"Earth has no sorrow that God cannot heal."

THOSE EVENING BELLS.

Those evening bells! those evening bells!
How many a tale their music tells,
Of youth, and home, and that sweet time
When last I heard their soothing chime!

Those joyous hours are passed away;
And many a heart that then was gay,
Within the tomb now darkly dwells,
And hears no more those evening bells.

And so 'twill be when I am gone.—
That tuneful peal will still ring on;
While other bards shall walk these dells,
And sing your praise, sweet evening bells.

THOU ART, O GOD.

Thou art, O God! the life and light
Of all this wondrous world we see;
Its glow by day, its smile by night,
Are but reflections caught from Thee.
Where'er we turn Thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are Thine.

When day, with farewell beam, delays
Among the opening clouds of even,
And we can almost think we gaze
Through golden vistas into heaven;
Those hues, that make the sun's decline
So soft, so radiant, Lord! are Thine.

When night, with wings of starry gloom,
O'ershadows all the earth and skies,
Like some dark, beauteous bird, whose plume
Is sparkling with unnumbered eyes;—
That sacred gloom, those fires divine,
So grand, so countless, Lord! are Thine.

When youthful spring around us breathes,
Thy spirit warms her fragrant sigh;
And every flower the summer wreathes
Is born beneath that kindling eye.
Where'er we turn Thy glories shine,
And all things fair and bright are Thine.

AS SLOW OUR SHIP.

As slow our ship her foamy track
Against the wind was cleaving,
Her trembling pennant still looked back
To that dear isle 'twas leaving.
So loth we part from all we love,
From all the links that bind us;
So turn our hearts, where'er we rove,
To those we've left behind us!

When round the bowl, of vanished years
We talk, with joyous seeming,—
With smiles, that might as well be tears,
So faint, so sad their beaming;
While memory brings us back again
Each early tie that twined us,
Oh, sweet's the cup that circles then
To those we've left behind us!

And when, in other climes, we meet
Some isle or vale enchanting,
Where all looks flowery, wild, and sweet,
And naught but love is wanting;
We think how great had been our bliss,
If heaven had but assigned us
To live and die in scenes like this,
With some we've left behind us!

As travellers oft look back, at eve,
When eastward darkly going,
To gaze upon that light they leave
Still faint behind them glowing,—
So, when the close of pleasure's day
To gloom hath near consigned us,
We turn to catch one fading ray
Of joy that's left behind us.

GEORGE P. MORRIS.

WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE!

Woodman, spare that tree!
Touch not a single bough:
In youth it sheltered me
And I'll protect it now,
'Twas my forefather's hand
That placed it near his cot;
There, woodman, let it stand,
Thy axe shall harm it not.

That old familiar tree,
Whose glory and renown
Are spread o'er land and sea,
And wouldst thou hew it down!
Woodman, forbear thy stroke!
Cut not its earth-bound ties;
Oh, spare that agèd oak,
Now towering to the skies.

When but an idle boy,
I sought its grateful shade;
In all their gushing joy,
Here, too, my sisters played.
My mother kissed me here;
My father press'd my hand:
Forgive this foolish tear, —
But let that old oak stand!

My heart-strings round thee cling,
Close as thy bark, old friend!
Here shall the wild-bird sing;
And still thy branches bend.
Old tree! the storm still brave!
And, woodman, leave that spot;
While I've a hand to save,
Thy axe shall harm it not.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

[*From the Earthly Paradise.*]

FEBRUARY.

Noon, — and the northwest sweeps the empty road,
The rain-washed fields from hedge to hedge are bare;
Beneath the leafless elms some hind's abode
Looks small and void, and no smoke meets the air
From its poor hearth: one lonely rook doth dare
The gale, and beats about the unseen corn,
Then turns, and whirling down the wind is borne.

Shall it not hap that on some dawn of May
Thou shalt awake, and, thinking of days dead,
See nothing clear but this same dreary day,
Of all the days that have passed o'er thine head?
Shalt thou not wonder, looking from thy bed,
Through green leaves on the windless east a-fire,
That this day, too, thine heart doth still desire.

Shalt thou not wonder that it liveth yet,
The useless hope, the useless craving pain,
That made thy face, that lonely noontide, wet
With more than beating of the chilly rain?
Shalt thou not hope for joy new-born again,
Since no grief ever born can ever die
Through changeless change of seasons passing by?

[*From the Earthly Paradise.*]

MARCH.

Slayer of winter, art thou here again?
O welcome, thou that bring'st the summer nigh!
The bitter wind makes not thy victory vain,
Nor will we mock thee for thy faint blue sky.
Welcome, O March! whose kindly days and dry
Make April ready for the throstle's song,
Thou first redresser of the winter's wrong!

Yea, welcome, March! and though I die ere June,
Yet for the hope of life I give thee praise,
Striving to swell the burden of the tune
That even now I hear thy brown birds raise,
Unmindful of the past or coming days;
Who sing, "O joy! a new year is begun!
What happiness to look upon the sun!"

Oh, what begetteth all this storm of bliss,
But Death himself, who, crying solemnly,
Even from the heart of sweet forgetfulness,
Bids us, "Rejoice! lest pleasureless ye die.
Within a little time must ye go by.
Stretch forth your open hands, and, while ye live,
Take all the gifts that Death and Life may give?"

[*From the Earthly Paradise.*]

APRIL.

O fair midspring, besung so oft and oft,
How can I praise thy loveliness enow?
Thy sun that burns not and thy breezes soft
That o'er the blossoms of the orchard blow,
The thousand things that 'neath the young leaves grow,
The hopes and chances of the growing year,
Winter forgotten long and summer near.
When summer brings the lily and the rose,
She brings no fear; her very death she brings
Hid in her anxious heart, the forge of woes;
And dull with fear, no more the mavis sings.
But thou! thou diest not, but thy fresh life clings
About the fainting autumn's sweet decay,
When in the earth the hopeful seed they lay.

Ah! life of all the year, why yet do I,
Amid thy snowy blossoms' fragrant drift,
Still long for that which never draweth nigh,
Striving my pleasure from my pain to sift,
Some weight from off my fluttering mirth to lift?
—Now when far bells are ringing, "Come again,
Come back, past years! why will ye pass in vain?"

[*From the Earthly Paradise.*]

DECEMBER.

Dead lonely night, and all streets quiet now,
Thin o'er the moon the hindmost cloud swims past
Of that great rack that brought us up the snow;
On earth, strange shadows o'er the snow are cast;
Pale stars, bright moon, swift cloud, make heaven so vast,
That earth, left silent by the wind of night,
Seems shrunken 'neath the gray unmeasured height.

Ah! through the hush the looked-for midnight clangs!
And then, e'en while its last stroke's solemn drone
In the cold air by unlit windows hangs,
Out break the bells above the year foredone,
Change, kindness lost, love left unloved alone;
Till their despairing sweetness makes thee deem
Thou once wert loved, if but amidst a dream.

Oh, thou who clingest still to life and love,
Though naught of good, no God thou mayst discern,
Though naught that is, thine utmost woe can move,
Though no soul knows wherewith thine heart doth yearn,
Yet, since thy weary lips no curse can learn,
Cast no least thing thou lovedst once away,
Since yet, perchance, thine eyes shall see the day.

WILLIAM MOTHERWELL.

LAST VERSES.

[Given to a Friend a day or two before the Writer's Death.]

WHEN I beneath the cold red earth am sleeping,
Life's fever o'er.
Will there for me be any bright eye weeping
That I'm no more?
Will there be any heart still memory keeping
Of heretofore?

When the great winds through leafless forests rushing
Sad music make;
When the swollen streams, o'er crag and gully gushing,
Like full hearts break, —
Will there then one, whose heart despair is crushing,
Mourn for my sake?

When the bright sun upon that spot is shining,
With purest ray,
And the small flowers, their buds and blossoms twining,
Burst through that clay, —
Will there be one still on that spot repining
Lost hopes all day?

When no star twinkles with its eye of glory
On that low mound,
And wintry storms have, with their ruins hoary,
Its loneness crowned, —
Will there be then one, versed in misery's story,
Pacing it round?

It may be so, — but this is selfish sorrow
To ask such meed, —
A weakness and a wickedness to borrow,
From hearts that bleed,
The wailings of to-day for what to-morrow
Shall never need.

Lay me then gently in my narrow dwelling,
Thou gentle heart;
And though thy bosom should with grief be swelling,
Let no tear start:
It were in vain, — for Time hath long been knelling, —
"Sad one, depart!"

MY HEID IS LIKE TO REND, WILLIE.

MY heid is like to rend, Willie,
My heart is like to break;
I'm wearin' off my feet, Willie,
I'm dyin' for your sake!
O, lay your cheek to mine, Willie,
Your hand on my briest-bane, —
O, say ye'll think on me, Willie,
When I am dead and gane!

It's vain to comfort me, Willie,
Sair grief maun ha'e its will;
But let me rest upon your briest
To sab and greet my fill.
Let me sit on your knee, Willie,
Let me shed by your hair,
And look into the face, Willie,
I never sall see mair!

I'm sittin' on your knee, Willie,
For the last time in my life, —
A puir heart-broken thing, Willie!
A mither, yet nae wife.
Ay, press your hand upon my heart
And press it mair and mair;
Or it will burst the silken twine,
Sae strang is its despair!

O, wae's me for the hour, Willie,
When we thegither met, —
O, wae's me for the time, Willie,
That our first tryst was set!
O wae's me for the loanin' green
Where we were wont to gae, —
And wae's me for the destinie
That gart me luve thee sae!

O, dinna mind my words, Willie,
I downa seek to blame:
But O, it's hard to live, Willie,
And dree a warld's shame!
Hot tears are hailin' ower your cheek,
And hailin' ower your chin:
Why weep ye sae for worthlessness,
For sorrow and for sin?

I'm weary o' this warld, Willie,
And sick wi' a' I see,
I cannot live as I ha'e lived,
Or be as I should be.
But fauld unto your heart, Willie,
The heart that still is thine,
And kiss ance mair the white, white cheek
Ye said was red langsyne.

A stoun' gaes through my heid, Willie,
A sair stoun' through my heart;
Oh, haud me up and let me kiss
Thy brow ere we two pairt.
Anither, and anither yet!—
How fast my life-strings break!—
Fareweel! fareweel! through yon kirk-yard
Step lichtly for my sake!

The laverock in the lift, Willie,
That lilts far ower our heid,
Will sing the morn as merrilie
Abune the clay-cauld deid;
And this green turf we're sittin' on,
Wi' dew-drops shimmerin' sheen,
Will hap the heart that luvit thee
As warld has seldom seen.

But oh! remember me, Willie,
On land where'er ye be;
And oh! think on the leal, leal heart,
That ne'er luvit ane but thee!
And oh! think on the cauld, cauld mools
That file my yellow hair,
That kiss the cheek, and kiss the chin
Ye never shall kiss mair!

THE CAVALIER'S SONG.

A STEED,—a steed of matchless speed!
A sword of metal keen!
All else to noble hearts is dross,
All else on earth is mean.
The neighing of the war-horse proud,
The rolling of the drum,
The clangor of the trumpet loud,
Be sounds from heaven that come;
And oh! the thundering press of knights,
Whenas their war-cries swell,
May tole from heaven an angel bright,
And rouse a fiend from hell.

Then mount! then mount! brave gallants all,
And don your helms amain:
Death's couriers, fame and honor, call
Us to the field again.
No shrewish tear shall fill our eye
When the sword-hilt's in our hand:
Heart-whole, we'll part, and no whit sigh
For the fairest of the land;
Let piping swain and craven wight
Thus weep, and puling cry,
Our business is like men to fight;
And hero-like to die!

JEANIE MORRISON.

I'VE wandered east, I've wandered west,
Through mony a weary way;
But never, never can forget
The luve o' life's young day!
The fire that's blawn on Beltane e'en
May weel be black gin Yule;
But blacker fa' awaits the heart
Where first fond luve grows cool.

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison.
The thochts o' bygane years
Still fling their shadows ower my path,
And blind my een with tears:
They blind my een wi' saut, saut tears,
And sair and sick I pine,

As memory idly summons up
The blithe blinks o' langsyne.

'T was then we luvit ilk ither weel,
'T was then we twa did part;
Sweet time — sad time! twa bairns at scule,
Twa bairns, and but ae heart!
'T was then we sat on ae laigh bink
To leir ilk ither lear;
And tones and looks and smiles were shed,
Remembered evermair.

I wonder, Jeanie, aften yet,
When sitting on that bink,
Cheek touchin' cheek, loof locked in loof,
What our wee heads could think?
When baith bent down ower ae braid page,
Wi' ae buik on our knee,
Thy lips were on thy lesson, but
My lesson was in thee.

Oh, mind ye how we hung our heads,
How cheeks brent red wi' shame,
When'er the scule-weans laughin' said,
We cleeked thegither hame?
And mind ye o' the Saturdays
(The schule then skail't at noon)
When we ran off to speel the braes, —
The broomy braes o' June?

My head rins round and round about,
My heart flows like a sea,
As ane by ane the thochts rush back
O' scule-time and o' thee.
Oh, mornin' life! oh mornin' love!
Oh, lichtsome days and lang!
When hinnied hopes around our hearts
Like simmer blossoms sprang!

Oh, mind ye, luve, how aft we left
The deavin', dinsome toun,
To wander by the green burnside,
And hear its waters croon?
The simmer leaves hung o'er our heads,
The flowers burst round our feet,
And in the gloamin' o' the wood
The throssil whusslit sweet;

The throssil whusslit in the wood,
The burn sang to the trees,
And we, with Nature's heart in tune,
Concerted harmonies;
And on the knowe abune the burn
For hours thegither sat
In the silentness o' joy, till baith
Wi' very gladness grat.

Aye, aye, dear Jeanie Morrison,
Tears trickle down your cheek,
Like dew-beads on a rose, yet nane
Had ony power to speak!
That was a time, a blessed time,
When hearts were fresh and young,
When freely gushed all feelin's forth,
Unsyllabled, unsung!

I marvel, Jeanie Morrison,
Gin I hae been to thee
As closely twined wi' earliest thochts
As ye hae been to me!
O, tell me gin their music fills
Thine ear as it does mine!
O, say gin e'er your heart grows grit
Wi' dreamings o' langsyne!

I've wandered east, I've wandered west,
I've borne a weary lot;
But in my wanderings, far or near,
Ye never were forgot.
The fount that first burst frae this heart
Still travels on its way;
And channels deeper, as it rins,
The luve o' life's young day,

O dear, dear Jeanie Morrison,
Since we were sindered young,
I've never seen your face, nor heard
The music o' your tongue;
But I could hug all wretchedness,
And happy could I dee,
Did I but ken your heart still dreamed
O' bygane days and me!

THEY COME! THE MERRY SUMMER MONTHS.

THEY come! the merry summer months of beauty, song, and flowers;
They come! the gladsome months that bring thick leafiness to bowers,
Up, up, my heart! and walk abroad; fling cark and care aside;
Seek silent hills, or rest thyself where peaceful waters glide;
Or, underneath the shadow vast of patriarchal tree,
Scan through its leaves the cloudless sky in rapt tranquillity.

The grass is soft, its velvet touch is grateful to the hand;
And, like the kiss of maiden love, the breeze is sweet and bland;
The daisy and the buttercup are nodding courteously;
It stirs their blood with kindest love, to bless and welcome thee:
And mark how with thine own thin locks — they now are silvery gray —
That blissful breeze is wantoning, and whispering, "Be gay!"

There is no cloud that sails along the ocean of yon sky,
But hath its own winged mariners to give it melody:
Thou seest their glittering fans outspread, all gleaming like red gold;
And hark! with shrill pipe musical, their merry course they hold.
God bless them all, those little ones, who, far above this earth,
Can make a scoff of its mean joys, and vent a nobler mirth.

But soft! mine ear upcaught a sound,— from yonder wood it came!
The spirit of the dim green glade did breathe his own glad name;—
Yes, it is he! the hermit bird, that, apart from all his kind,
Slow spells his beads monotonous to the soft western wind;
Cuckoo! Cuckoo! he sings again,— his notes are void of art;
But simplest strains do soonest sound the deep founts of the heart.

Good Lord! it is a gracious boon for thought-crazed wight like me,
To smell again these summer flowers beneath this summer tree!
To suck once more in every breath their little souls away,
And feed my fancy with fond dreams of youth's bright summer day,
When, rushing forth like untamed colt, the reckless, truant boy
Wandered through greenwoods all day long, a mighty heart of joy!

I'm sadder now — I have had cause; but oh! I'm proud to think
That each pure joy-fount, loved of yore, I yet delight to drink: —
Leaf, blossom, blade, hill, valley, stream, the calm unclouded sky,
Still mingle music with my dreams, as in the days gone by.
When summer's loveliness and light fall round me dark and cold,
I'll bear indeed life's heaviest curse,— a heart that hath waxed old!

LADY CAROLINE NAIRN.

THE LAND O' THE LEAL.

I'M wearin' awa', Jean,
Like snaw-wreaths in thaw, Jean;
I'm wearin' awa'
To the Land o' the Leal.

There's nae sorrow there, Jean;
There's neither cauld nor care, Jean,
The day's aye fair
I' the Land o' the Leal.

Our bonny bairn's there, Jean:
She was baith gude and fair, Jean;
And, oh! we grudged her sair
  To the Land o' the Leal.
But sorrow's sel' wears past, Jean —
And joy 's a-comin' fast, Jean, —
The joy that's aye to last
  In the Land o' the Leal.

Sae dear's that joy was bought, Jean,
Sae free the battle fought, Jean,
That sinfu' man e'er brought
  To the Land o' the Leal.

Oh, dry your glistening e'e, Jean!
My soul langs to be free, Jean;
And angels beckon me
  To the Land o' the Leal.

Oh, haud ye leal and true, Jean!
Your day it's wearin' through, Jean;
And I'll welcome you
  To the Land o' the Leal.
Now, fare-ye-well, my ain Jean,
This warld's cares are vain, Jean;
We'll meet, and we'll be fain,
  In the Land o' the Leal.

WILLIAM NEWELL.

SERVE GOD AND BE CHEERFUL.

"Serve God and be cheerful." The motto
  Shall be mine, as the bishop's of old;
On my soul's coat-of-arms, I will write it
  In letters of azure and gold.

"Serve God and be cheerful," self-balanced,
  Whether Fortune smile sweetly or frown.
Christ stood king before Pilate. Within me
  I carry the sceptre and crown.

"Serve God and be cheerful." Make brighter
  The brightness that falls to your lot;
The rare or the daily-sent blessing,
  Profane not with gloom and with doubt.

"Serve God and be cheerful." Each sorrow
  Is — with your will in God's — for the best,
O'er the cloud hangs the rainbow. To-morrow
  Will see the blue sky in the west.

"Serve God and be cheerful." The darkness
  Only masks the surprises of dawn;
And the deeper and grimmer the midnight,
  The brighter and sweeter the morn.

"Serve God and be cheerful." The winter
  Rolls round to the beautiful spring,
And in the green grave of the snow-drift
  The nest-building robins will sing.

"Serve God and be cheerful." Look upward!
  God's countenance scatters the gloom;
And the soft summer light of His heaven
  Shines over the cross and the tomb.

"Serve God and be cheerful." The wrinkles
  Of age we may take with a smile;
But the wrinkles of faithless foreboding
  Are the crow's feet of Beelzebub's guile.

"Serve God and be cheerful." Religion
  Looks all the more lovely in white;
And God is best served by His servant
  When, smiling, he serves in the light;

And lives out the glad tidings of Jesus
In the sunshine He came to impart,
For the fruit of His word and His Spirit
"Is love, joy and peace" in the heart.

"Serve God and be cheerful." Live nobly,
Do right and do good. Make the best
Of the gifts and the work put before you,
And to God, without fear, leave the rest.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

A VOICE FROM AFAR.

Weep not for me; —
Be blithe as wont, nor tinge with gloom
The stream of love that circles home,
Light hearts and free!
Joy in the gifts Heaven's bounty lends;
Nor miss my face, dear friends!

I still am near; —
Watching the smiles I prized on earth;
Your converse mild, your blameless mirth;
Now, too, I hear
Of whispered sounds the tale complete,
Low prayers and music sweet.

A sea before
The Throne is spread: — its pure still glass
Pictures all earth-scenes as they pass.
We, on its shore,
Share, in the bosom of our rest.
God's knowledge, and are blessed.

FLOWERS WITHOUT FRUIT.

Prune thou thy words, the thoughts control
That o'er thee swell and throng;
They will condense within thy soul,
And change to purpose strong.

But he who lets his feelings run
In soft luxurious flow,
Shrinks when hard service must be done,
And faints at every woe.

Faith's meanest deed more favor bears,
When hearts and wills are weighed.
Than highest transport's choicest prayers,
Which bloom their hour and fade.

ANDREWS NORTON.

SCENE AFTER A SUMMER SHOWER.

The rain is o'er. How dense and bright
Yon pearly clouds reposing lie!
Cloud above cloud, a glorious sight,
Contrasting with the dark blue sky!

In grateful silence earth receives
The general blessing; fresh and fair,
Each flower expands its little leaves,
As glad the common joy to share.

The softened sunbeams pour around
A fairy light, uncertain, pale;

The wind blows cool; the scented ground
Is breathing odors on the gale.

Mid yon rich clouds' voluptuous pile,
Methinks some spirit of the air
Might rest, to gaze below awhile,
Then turn to bathe and revel there.

The sun breaks forth; from off the scene
Its floating veil of mist is flung;
And all the wilderness of green
With trembling drops of light is hung.

Now gaze on nature, — yet the same;
Glowing with life, by breezes fanned,
Luxuriant, lovely, as she came,
Fresh in her youth, from God's own hand.

Hear the rich music of that voice,
Which sounds from all below, above;
She calls her children to rejoice,
And round them throws her arms of love.

Drink in her influence; low-born care.
And all the train of mean desire,
Refuse to breathe this holy air,
And mid this living light expire.

CAROLINE E. S. NORTON.

BINGEN ON THE RHINE.

A SOLDIER of the Legion lay dying in Algiers,
There was lack of woman's nursing, there was dearth of woman's tears;
But a comrade stood beside him, while his lifeblood ebbed away,
And bent with pitying glances, to hear what he might say.
The dying soldier faltered, and he took that comrade's hand,
And he said, "I nevermore shall see my own, my native land:
Take a message, and a token, to some distant friends of mine,
For I was born at Bingen, — at Bingen on the Rhine.

"Tell my brothers and companions, when they meet and crowd around,
To hear my mournful story, in the pleasant vineyard ground,
That we fought the battle bravely, and when the day was done,
Full many a corse lay ghastly pale beneath the setting sun;
And, mid the dead and dying, were some grown old in wars, —
The death-wound on their gallant breasts, the last of many scars;
And some were young, and suddenly beheld life's morn decline, —
And one had come from Bingen, — fair Bingen on the Rhine.

"Tell my mother that her other son shall comfort her old age;
For I was still a truant bird, that thought his home a cage.
For my father was a soldier, and even as a child
My heart leaped forth to hear him tell of struggles fierce and wild;
And when he died, and left us to divide his scanty hoard,
I let them take whate'er they would, — but kept my father's sword;
And with boyish love I hung it where the bright light used to shine
On the cottage wall at Bingen, — calm Bingen on the Rhine.

"Tell my sister not to weep for me, and sob with drooping head,
When the troops come marching home again with glad and gallant tread,
But to look upon them proudly, with a calm and steadfast eye,
For her brother was a soldier too, and not afraid to die;
And if a comrade seek her love, I ask her in my name
To listen to him kindly, without regret or shame,
And to hang the old sword in its place (my father's sword and mine)
For the honor of old Bingen, — dear Bingen on the Rhine.

"There's another, — not a sister: in the happy days gone by
You'd have known her by the merriment that sparkled in her eye;
Too innocent for coquetry, — too fond for idle scorning, —
O friend! I fear the lightest heart makes sometimes heaviest mourning!
Tell her the last night of my life (for, ere the moon be risen,
My body will be out of pain, my soul be out of prison), —
I dreamed I stood with *her*, and saw the yellow sunlight shine
On the vine-clad hills of Bingen, — fair Bingen on the Rhine.

"I saw the blue Rhine sweep along, — I heard, or seemed to hear,
The German songs we used to sing, in chorus sweet and clear;
And down the pleasant river, and up the slanting hill,
The echoing chorus sounded, through the evening calm and still;
And her glad blue eyes were on me, as we passed, with friendly talk,
Down many a path beloved of yore, and well-remembered walk!
And her little hand lay lightly, confidingly, in mine, —
But we'll meet no more at Bingen, — loved Bingen on the Rhine."

His trembling voice grew faint and hoarse, — his grasp was childish weak, —
His eyes put on a dying look, — he sighed, and ceased to speak;
His comrade bent to lift him, but the spark of life had fled, —
The soldier of the Legion in a foreign land is dead;
And the soft moon rose up slowly, and calmly she looked down
On the red sand of the battle-field, with bloody corses strown;
Yet calmly on that dreadful scene her pale light seemed to shine,
As it shone on distant Bingen, — fair Bingen on the Rhine.

WE HAVE BEEN FRIENDS TOGETHER.

We have been friends together
In sunshine and in shade,
Since first beneath the chestnut-trees,
In infancy we played.
But coldness dwells within thy heart,
A cloud is on thy brow;
We have been friends together,
Shall a light word part us now?

We have been gay together;
We have laughed at little jests;
For the fount of hope was gushing
Warm and joyous in our breasts,
But laughter now hath fled thy lip,
And sullen glooms thy brow;
We have been gay together,
Shall a light word part us now?

We have been sad together;
We have wept with bitter tears
O'er the grass-grown graves where slumbered
The hopes of early years.
The voices which are silent there
Would bid thee clear thy brow;
We have been sad together.
Oh, what shall part us now?

JOHN BOYLE O'REILLY.

PEACE AND PAIN.

The day and night are symbols of creation,
And each has part in all that God has made:
There is no ill without its compensation,
And life and death are only light and shade.
There never beat a heart so base and sordid
But felt at times a sympathetic glow;
There never lived a virtue unrewarded,
Nor died a vice without its meed of woe.

In this brief life despair should never reach us;
The sea looks wide because the shores are dim;
The star that led the Magi still can teach us
The way to go if we but look to Him.

And as we wade, the darkness closing o'er us,
The hungry waters surging to the chin,
Our deeds will rise like stepping-stones before us —
The good and bad — for we may use the sin.

A sin of youth, atoned for and forgiven,
Takes on a virtue, if we choose to find:
When clouds across our onward path are driven,
We still may steer by its pale light behind.
A sin forgotten is in part to pay for.
A sin remembered is a constant gain:
Sorrow, next joy, is what we ought to pray for,
As next to peace we profit most from pain.

THE RIDE OF COLLINS GRAVES.

No song of a soldier riding down
To the raging fight from Winchester town;
No song of a time that shook the earth
With the nation's throe at a nation's birth:
But the song of a brave man, free from fear
As Sheridan's self or Paul Revere;
Who risked what they risked, free from strife,
And its promise of glorious pay — his life!

The peaceful valley has waked and stirred,
And the answering echoes of life are heard:
The dew still clings to the trees and grass,
And the early toilers smiling pass,
As they glance aside at the white-walled homes,
Or up the valley where merrily comes
The brook that sparkles in diamond rills
As the sun comes over the Hampshire hills.

What was it that passed like an ominous breath —
Like a shiver of fear or a touch of death?
What was it? The valley is peaceful still,
And the leaves are afire on top of the hill.
It was not a sound — nor a thing of sense —
But a pain, like the pang of the short suspense
That thrills the being of those who see
At their feet the gulf of Eternity!

The air of the valley has felt the chill:
The workers pause at the door of the mill;
The housewife, keen to the shivering air
Arrests her foot on the cottage stair,
Instinctive taught by the mother-love,
And thinks of the sleeping ones above.
Why start the listeners ? Why does the course
Of the mill-stream widen ? Is it a horse —
Hark to the sound of his hoofs, they say —
That gallops so wildly Williamsburg way!

God! what was that, like a human shriek
From the winding valley ? Will nobody speak ?
Will nobody answer those women who cry
As the awful warnings thunder by ?

Whence come they ? Listen! And now they hear
The sound of the galloping horse-hoofs near;
They watch the trend of the vale, and see
The rider who thunders so menacingly,
With waving arms and warning scream
To the home-filled banks of the valley stream.
He draws no rein, but he shakes the street
With a shout and the ring of the galloping feet;
And this the cry he flings to the wind:
"To the hills for your lives! The flood is behind!"

He cries and is gone: but they know the worst —
The breast of the Williamsburg dam has burst!
The basin that nourished their happy homes
Is changed to a demon. It comes! it comes!
A monster in aspect, with shaggy front,
Of shattered dwellings, to take the brunt
Of the homes they shatter — white-maned and hoarse,
The merciless Terror fills the course
Of the narrow valley, and rushing raves,
With Death on the first of its hissing waves,
Till cottage and street and crowded mill
Are crumbled and crushed.

But onward still,
In front of the roaring flood is heard
The galloping horse and the warning word.
Thank God! the brave man's life is spared!
From Williamsburg town he nobly dared
To race with the flood and take the road
In front of the terrible swath it mowed.
For miles it thundered and crashed behind,
But he looked ahead with a steadfast mind;
"They must be warned!" was all he said,
As away on his terrible ride he sped.

When heroes are called for, bring the crown
To this Yankee rider: send him down
On the stream of time with the Curtius old;
His deed as the Roman's was brave and bold,
And the tale can as noble a thrill awake,
For he offered his life for the people's sake.

FOREVER.

Those we love truly never die,
Though year by year the sad memorial wreath,
A ring and flowers, types of life and death,
Are laid upon their graves.

For death the pure life saves,
And life all pure is love; and love can reach
From heaven to earth, and nobler lessons teach
Than those by mortals read.

Well blessed is he who has a dear one dead;
A friend he has whose face will never change —
A dear companion that will not grow strange;
The anchor of a love is death.

The blessed sweetness of a loving breath
Will reach our cheek all fresh through weary years,
For her who died long since, ah! waste not tears,
She's thine unto the end.

Thank God for one dead friend,
With face still radiant with the light of truth,
Whose love comes laden with the scent of youth,
Through twenty years of death!

UNSPOKEN WORDS.

The kindly words that rise within the heart,
And thrill it with their sympathetic tone
But die ere spoken, fail to play their part,
And claim a merit that is not their own.
The kindly word unspoken is a sin,
A sin that wraps itself in purest guise,
And tells the heart that, doubting, looks within,
That not in speech, but thought, the virtue lies.

But 'tis not so: another heart may thirst
For that kind word, as Hagar in the wild —
Poor banished Hagar!—prayed a well might burst
From out the sand to save her parching child.
And loving eyes that cannot see the mind
Will watch the expected movement of the lip:
Ah! can ye let its cutting silence wind
Around that heart, and scathe it like a whip?

Unspoken words, like treasures in the mine,
Are valueless until we give them birth:
Like unfound gold their hidden beauties shine,
Which God has made to bless and gild the earth.
How sad 'twould be to see a master's hand
Strike glorious notes upon a voiceless lute!
But oh! what pain when, at God's own command,
A heartstring thrills with kindness, but is mute!

Then hide it not, the music of the soul,
Dear sympathy, expressed with kindly voice.
But let it like a shining river roll
To deserts dry, — to hearts that would rejoice.
Oh! let the symphony of kindly words
Sound for the poor, the friendless, and the weak;
And He will bless you, — He who struck these chords
Will strike another when in turn you seek.

HIDDEN SINS.

For every sin that comes before the light,
And leaves an outward blemish on the soul,

How many, darker, cower out of sight,
And burrow, blind and silent, like the mole.
And like the mole, too, with its busy feet
That dig and dig a never-ending cave,
Our hidden sins gnaw through the soul, and meet
And feast upon each other in its grave.

. . . .

FRANCES SARGENT OSGOOD.

LABORARE EST ORARE.

PAUSE not to dream of the future before us;
Pause not to weep the wild cares that come o'er us;
Hark, how Creation's deep, musical chorus,
Unintermitting, goes up into heaven!
Never the ocean wave falters in flowing;
Never the little seed stops in its growing;
More and more richly the rose heart keeps glowing,
Till from its nourishing stem it is riven.

"Labor is worship!"—the robin is singing;
"Labor is worship!"—the wild bee is ringing;
Listen! that eloquent whisper, upspringing,
Speaks to thy soul from out Nature's great heart.
From the dark cloud flows the life-giving shower;
From the rough sod blows the soft-breathing flower;
From the small insect, the rich coral bower;
Only man shrinks, in the plan, from his part.

Labor is life!—'Tis the still water faileth;
Idleness ever despaireth, bewaileth;
Keep the watch wound, for the dark rust assaileth!
Flowers droop and die in the stillness of noon.
Labor is glory!—the flying cloud lightens;
Only the waving wing changes and brightens;
Idle hearts only the dark future frightens;
Play the sweet keys, wouldst thou keep them in tune!

Labor is rest,—from the sorrows that greet us;
Rest from all petty vexations that meet us,
Rest from sin-promptings that ever entreat us,
Rest from world-sirens that lure us to ill.
Work,—and pure slumbers shall wait on thy pillow;
Work,—thou shalt ride over Care's coming billow:
Lie not down wearied 'neath Woe's weeping-willow!
Work with a stout heart and resolute will!

Labor is health,—lo! the husbandman reaping,
How through his veins goes the life-current leaping!
How his strong arm in his stalwart pride sweeping,
True as a sunbeam the swift sickle guides.
Labor is wealth,—in the sea the pearl groweth:
Rich the queen's robe from the frail cocoon floweth;
From the fine acorn the strong forest bloweth;
Temple and statue the marble block hides.

Droop not, though shame, sin, and anguish are round thee!
Bravely fling off the cold chain that hath bound thee!
Look to yon pure heaven smiling beyond thee!
  Rest not content in thy darkness, — a clod!
Work — for some good, be it ever so slowly;
Cherish some flower, be it ever so lowly:
Labor! — all labor is noble and holy:
  Let thy great deeds be thy prayer to thy God.

KATE PUTNAM OSGOOD.

BEFORE THE PRIME.

You think you love me, Marguerite,
Because you find Love's fancy sweet;
So, zealously, you seek a sign
To prove your heart is wholly mine.

Ah, were it so! But listen, dear!
Bethink you how, this very year,
With fond impatience you were fain
To watch the earth grow green again;

When April's violets, here and there,
Surprised the unexpectant air,
You searched them out, and brought me some,
To show, you said, that spring was come.

But, sweetheart, when the lavish May
Rained flowers and fragrance round your way,
You had no thought her bloom to bring,
To prove the presence of the spring!

Believe me, when Love's April-time
Shall ripen to its perfect prime,
You will not need a sign to know
What every glance and breath will show!

DRIVING HOME THE COWS.

Out of the clover and blue-eyed grass
  He turned them into the river lane;
One after another he let them pass,
  Then fastened the meadow-bars again.

Under the willows, and over the hill,
  He patiently followed their sober pace;
The merry whistle for once was still,
  And something shadowed the sunny face.

Only a boy! and his father had said
  He never could let his youngest go:
Two already were lying dead,
  Under the feet of the trampling foe.

But after the evening work was done,
  And the frogs were loud in the meadow-swamp,
Over his shoulder he slung his gun,
  And stealthily followed the foot-path damp.

Across the clover, and through the wheat,
  With resolute heart and purpose grim,
Though cold was the dew on his hurrying feet,
  And the blind bat's flitting startled him.

Thrice since then had the lanes been white,
  And the orchards sweet with apple-bloom;
And now, when the cows came back at night,
  The feeble father drove them home.

For news had come to the lonely farm
  That three were lying where two had lain;

And the old man's tremulous, palsied arm
  Could never lean on a son's again.

The summer day grew cool and late,
  He went for the cows when the work was done;
But down the lane, as he opened the gate,
  He saw them coming one by one, —

Brindle, Ebony, Speckle, and Bess,
  Shaking their horns in the evening wind;
Cropping the buttercups out of the grass, —
  But who was it following close behind?

Loosely swung in the idle air
  The empty sleeve of army blue;
And worn and pale, from the crisping hair,
  Looked out a face that the father knew.

For southern prisons will sometimes yawn,
  And yield their dead unto life again;
And the day that comes with a cloudy dawn
  In golden glory at last may wane.

The great tears sprang to their meeting eyes;
  For the heart must speak when the lips are dumb;
And under the silent evening skies
  Together they followed the cattle home.

ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY.

SONG OF A FELLOW-WORKER.

I FOUND a fellow-worker when I deemed I toiled alone:
My toil was fashioning thought and sound, and his was hewing stone;
I worked in the palace of my brain, he in the common street;
And it seemed his toil was great and hard, while mine was great and sweet.

I said, "O fellow-worker, yea, for I am a worker too,
The heart nigh fails me many a day, but how is it with you?
For while I toil, great tears of joy will sometimes fill my eyes,
And when I form my perfect work, it lives and never dies.

"I carve the marble of pure thought until the thought takes form,
Until it gleams before my soul and makes the world grow warm;
Until there comes the glorious voice and words that seem divine,
And the music reaches all men's hearts and draws them into mine.

"And yet for days it seems my heart shall blossom never more,
And the burden of my loneliness lies on me very sore:
Therefore, O hewer of the stones that pave base human ways,
How canst thou bear the years till death, made of such thankless days?"

Then he replied: "Ere sunrise, when the pale lips of the day
Sent forth an earnest thrill of breath at warmth of the first ray,
A great thought rose within me, how, while men asleep had lain,
The thousand labors of the world had grown up once again.

"The sun grew on the world, and on my soul the thought grew too, —
A great appalling sun, to light my soul the long day through.
I felt the world's whole burden for a moment, then began
With man's gigantic strength to do the labor of one man.

"I went forth hastily, and lo! I met a hundred men,
The worker with the chisel and the worker with the pen, —
The restless toilers after good, who sow and never reap.
And one who maketh music for their souls that may not sleep.

"Each passed me with a dauntless look, and my undaunted eyes
Were almost softened as they passed with tears that strove to rise
At sight of all those labors, and because that every one,
Ay, the greatest, would be greater if my little were undone.

"They passed me, having faith in me, and in our several ways,
Together we began to-day as on the other days:
I felt their mighty hands at work, and, as the days wore through,
Perhaps they felt that even I was helping somewhat too.

"Perhaps they felt, as with those hands they lifted mightily
The burden once more laid upon the world so heavily,
That while they nobly held it as each man can do and bear,
It did not wholly fall my side as though no men were there.

"And so we toil together many a day from morn till night,
I in the lower depths of life, they on the lovely height;
For though the common stones are mine, and they have lofty cares,
Their work begins where this leaves off, and mine is part of theirs.

"And 't is not wholly mine or theirs, I think of through the day,
But the great, eternal thing we make together, I and they;
Far in the sunset I behold a city that man owns,
Made fair with all their nobler toil, built of my common stones.

"Then noonward, as the task grows light with all the labor done,
The single thought of all the day becomes a joyous one;
For, rising in my heart at last where it has lain so long,
It thrills up seeking for a voice, and grows almost a song.

"But when the evening comes, indeed, the words have taken wing,
The thought sings in me still, but I am all too tired to sing:
Therefore, O you my friend, who serve the world with minstrelsy,
Among our fellow-workers' songs make that one song for me.

REBECCA S. PALFREY.

WHITE UNDERNEATH.

INTO a city street,
Narrow and noisome, chance had led my feet;
Poisonous to every sense; and the sun's rays
Loved not the unclean place.
It seemed that no pure thing
Its whiteness here would ever dare to bring;
Yet even into this dark place and low,
God had sent down his snow.

Here, too, a little child,
Stood by the drift, now blackened and defiled;
And with his rosy hands, in earnest play,
Scraped the dark crust away.

Checking my hurried pace,
To watch the busy hands and earnest face,
I heard him laugh aloud in pure delight,
That underneath, 't was white.

Then, through a broken pane,
A woman's voice summoned him in again,
With softened mother-tones, that half excused
The unclean words she used.

And as I lingered near,
His baby accents fell upon my ear:
"See, I can make the snow again for you,
All clean and white and new!"

Ah! surely God knows best.
Our sight is short: faith trusts to Him the rest.
Sometimes, we know, He gives to human hands
To work out His commands.

Perhaps He holds apart,
By baby fingers in that mother's heart,
One fair, clean spot that yet may spread and grow,
Till all be white as snow.

THEODORE PARKER.

THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE.

O thou, great Friend to all the sons of men,
Who once appeared in humblest guise below,
Sin to rebuke, to break the captive's chain,
And call Thy brethren forth from want and woe, —
We look to thee! Thy truth is still the Light
Which guides the nations, groping on their way,
Stumbling and falling in disastrous night,
Yet hoping ever for the perfect day.
Yes; Thou art still the Life, Thou art the way
The holiest known; Light, Life, the Way of heaven!
And they who dearest hope and deepest pray
Toil by the Light, Life, Way, which Thou hast given.

THE HIGHER GOOD.

Father, I will not ask for wealth or fame,
Though once they would have joyed my carnal sense;
I shudder not to bear a hated name,
Wanting all wealth, myself my sole defence.
But give me, Lord, eyes to behold the truth;
A seeing sense that knows the eternal right;
A heart with pity filled, and gentlest ruth;
A manly faith that makes all darkness light.
Give me the power to labor for mankind;
Make me the mouth of such as cannot speak:
Eyes let me be to groping men, and blind;
A conscience to the base; and to the weak
Let me be hands and feet; and to the foolish, mind:
And lead still further on such as Thy kingdom seek.

THOMAS PARNELL.

HYMN TO CONTENTMENT.

LOVELY, lasting Peace of mind!
Sweet delight of human kind!
Heavenly-born, and bred on high,
To crown the favorites of the sky
With more of happiness below,
Than victors in a triumph know!
Whither, O whither art thou fled,
To lay thy meek, contented head?
What happy region dost thou please
To make the seat of calms and ease?
Ambition searches all its sphere
Of pomp and state, to meet thee there.
Increasing avarice would find
Thy presence in its gold enshrined.
The bold adventurer ploughs his way
Through rocks amidst the foaming sea
To gain thy love; and then perceives
Thou wert not in the rocks and waves.
The silent heart, which grief assails,
Treads soft and lonesome o'er the vales,
Sees daisies open, rivers run,
And seeks (as I have vainly done)
Amusing thought; but learns to know
That Solitude's the nurse of woe.
No real happiness is found
In trailing purple o'er the ground:
Or in a soul exalted high,
To range the circuit of the sky,
Converse with stars above, and know
All Nature in its forms below;
The rest it seeks, in seeking dies,
And doubts at last for knowledge rise.
Lovely, lasting Peace, appear!
This world itself, if thou art here,
Is once again with Eden blest,
And man contains it in his breast.
'Twas thus, as under shade I stood,
I sung my wishes to the wood,
And, lost in thought, no more perceived
The branches whisper as they waved;
It seemed as all the quiet place
Confessed the presence of her grace.
When thus she spoke — "Go rule thy will,
Bid thy wild passions all be still.
Know God — and bring thy heart to know
The joys which from religion flow:
Then every grace shall prove its guest,
And I'll be there to crown the rest."
Oh! by yonder mossy seat,
In my hours of sweet retreat,
Might I thus my soul employ
With sense of gratitude and joy:
Raised as ancient prophets were,
In heavenly vision, praise, and prayer;
Pleasing all men, hurting none,
Pleased and blessed with God alone:
Then while the gardens take my sight,
With all the colors of delight;
While silver waters glide along,
To please my ear, and court my song;
I'll lift my voice, and tune my string,
And thee, great Source of Nature, sing.
The sun that walks his airy way,
To light the world, and give the day;
The moon that shines with borrowed light;
The stars that gild the gloomy night;
The seas that roll unnumbered waves;
The wood that spreads its shady leaves;
The field whose ears conceal the grain,
The yellow treasure of the plain;
All of these, and all I see,
Should be sung, and sung by me:
They speak their Maker as they can,
But want and ask the tongue of man.
Go search among your idle dreams.
Your busy or your vain extremes;
And find a life of equal bliss,
Or own the next begun in this.

THOMAS WILLIAM PARSONS.

HUDSON RIVER.

RIVERS that roll most musical in song
Are often lovely to the mind alone:
The wanderer muses, as he moves along
Their barren banks, on glories not their own.

When, to give substance to his boyish dreams,
He leaves his own, far countries to survey,
Oft must he think, in greeting foreign streams,
"Their names alone are beautiful, not they."

If chance he mark the dwindled Arno pour
A tide more meagre than his native Charles;
Or views the Rhone when summer's heat is o'er,
Subdued and stagnant in the fen of Arles:

Or when he sees the slimy Tiber fling
His sullen tribute at the feet of Rome,
Oft to his thought must partial memory bring
More noble waves, without renown, at home.

Now let him climb the Catskill, to behold
The lordly Hudson, marching to the main,
And say what bard, in any land of old,
Had such a river to inspire his strain.

Along the Rhine gray battlements and towers
Declare what robbers once the realm possessed;
But here Heaven's handiwork surpasseth ours,
And man has hardly more than built his nest.

No storied castle overawes these heights;
Nor antique arches check the current's play;
Nor mouldering architrave the mind invites
To dream of deities long passed away.

No Gothic buttress, or decaying shaft
Of marble, yellowed by a thousand years,
Lifts a great landmark to the little craft,—
A summer cloud: that comes and disappears.

But cliffs, unaltered from their primal form
Since the subsiding of the deluge, rise
And hold their savins to the upper storm,
While far below, the skiff securely plies.

Farms, rich not more in meadows than in men
Of Saxon mould, and strong for every toil,
Spread o'er the plain, or scatter through the glen,
Bœotian plenty on a Spartan soil.

Then, where the reign of cultivation ends,
  Again the charming wilderness begins:
From steep to steep one solemn wood extends,
  Till some new hamlet's rise, the boscage thins.

And these deep groves forever have remained
  Touched by no axe, — by no proud owner nursed;
As now they stand they stood when Pharaoh reigned,
  Lineal descendants of creation's first.

. . . . . .

No tales, we know, are chronicled of thee
  In ancient scrolls; no deeds of doubtful claim
Have hung a history on every tree,
  And given each rock its fable and a fame.

But neither here hath any conqueror trod,
  Nor grim invaders from barbarian climes;
No horrors feigned of giant or of god
  Pollute thy stillness with recorded crimes.

Here never yet have happy fields laid waste,
  The ravished harvest and the blasted fruit,
The cottage ruined and the shrine defaced,
  Tracked the foul passage of the feudal brute.

"Yet, O Antiquity!" the stranger sighs;
  "Scenes wanting thee soon pall upon the view;
The soul's indifference dulls the sated eyes,
  Where all is fair indeed, — but all is new."

False thought! is age to crumbling walls confined?
  To Grecian fragments and Egyptian bones?
Hath Time no monuments to raise the mind,
  More than old fortresses and sculptured stones?

Call not this new which is the only land
  That wears unchanged the same primeval face
Which, when just dawning from its Maker's hand,
  Gladdened the first great grandsire of our race.

Nor did Euphrates with an earlier birth
  Glide past green Eden towards the unknown south,
Than Hudson broke upon the infant earth.
  And kissed the ocean with his nameless mouth.

Twin-born with Jordan, Ganges, and the Nile!
  Thebes and the pyramids to thee are young;
Oh! had thy waters burst from Britain's isle,
  Till now perchance they had not flowed unsung.

THE GROOMSMAN TO HIS MISTRESS.

EVERY wedding, says the proverb,
Makes another, soon or late;
Never yet was any marriage
Entered in the book of Fate,
But the names were also written
Of the patient pair that wait.

Blessings then upon the morning
When my friend with fondest look,
By the solemn rites' permission,
To himself his mistress took,
And the Destinies recorded
Other two within their book.

While the priest fulfilled his office,
Still the ground the lovers eyed,
And the parents and the kinsmen
Aimed their glances at the bride;
But the groomsmen eyed the virgins
Who were waiting at her side.

Three there were that stood beside her;
One was dark, and one was fair;
But nor fair nor dark the other,
Save her Arab eyes and hair;
Neither dark nor fair, I call her,
Yet she was the fairest there.

While her groomsman—shall I own it?
Yes, to thee, and only thee—
Gazed upon this dark-eyed maiden
Who was fairest of the three,
Thus he thought: "How blest the bridal
Where the bride were such as she!"

Then I mused upon the adage,
Till my wisdom was perplexed,
And I wondered, as the churchman
Dwelt upon his holy text,
Which of all who heard his lesson
Should require the service next.

Whose will be the next occasion
For the flowers, the feast, the wine?
Thine, perchance, my dearest lady;
Or, who knows?—it may be mine:
What if 't were—forgive the fancy—
What if 't were both mine and thine?

COVENTRY PATMORE.

[*From The Betrothal.*]

SWEET MEETING OF DESIRES.

I GREW assured before I asked.
That she'd be mine without reserve,
And in her unclaimed graces basked
At leisure, till the time should serve,—
With just enough of dread to thrill
The hope, and make it trebly dear;
Thus loath to speak the word, to kill
Either the hope or happy fear.

Till once, through lanes returning late,
Her laughing sisters lagged behind;
And ere we reached her father's gate,
We paused with one presentient mind;
And, in the dim and perfumed mist,
Their coming stayed; who blithe and free,
And very women, loved to assist
A lover's opportunity.

Twice rose, twice died, my trembling word;
To faint and frail cathedral chimes
Spake time in music, and we heard
The chafers rustling in the limes.
Her dress, that touched me where I stood;
The warmth of her confided arm;
Her bosom's gentle neighborhood;
Her pleasure in her power to charm;

Her look, her love, her form, her touch!
The least seemed most by blissful turn,—
Blissful but that it pleased too much,
And taught the wayward soul to yearn.

It was as if a harp with wires
Was traversed by the breath I drew;
And oh, sweet meeting of desires!
She, answering, owned that she loved too.

WOULD WISDOM FOR HERSELF BE WOOED.

Would Wisdom for herself be wooed,
And wake the foolish from his dream,
She must be glad as well as good,
And must not only be, but seem.
Beauty and joy are hers by right;
And, knowing this, I wonder less
That she's so scorned, when falsely dight
In misery and ugliness.
What's that which Heaven to man endears,
And that which eyes no sooner see
Than the heart says, with floods of tears,
"Ah! that's the thing which I would be?"
Not childhood, full of fears and frets:
Not youth, impatient to disown
Those visions high, which to forget
Were worse than never to have known.
Not these; but souls found here and here,
Oases in our waste of sin,
When everything is well and fair,
And God remits his discipline;
Whose sweet subdual of the world
The worldling scarce can recognize;
And ridicule, against it hurled,
Drops with a broken sting and dies.
They live by law, not like the fool,
But like the bard who freely sings
In strictest bonds of rhyme and rule,
And finds in them not bonds but wings.

JAMES GATES PERCIVAL.

[*From Prometheus, Part II.*]

APOSTROPHE TO THE SUN.

Centre of light and energy! thy way
Is through the unknown void; thou hast thy throne,
Morning, and evening, and at noon of day,
Far in the blue, untended and alone:
Ere the first-wakened airs of earth had blown,
On thou didst march, triumphant in thy light;
Then thou didst send thy glance, which still hath flown
Wide through the never-ending worlds of night,
And yet thy full orb burns with flash as keen and bright.

. . . . .

Thy path is high in Heaven; — we cannot gaze
On the intense of light that girds thy car;
There is a crown of glory in thy rays,
Which bear thy pure divinity afar,
To mingle with the equal light of star;
For thou, so vast to us, art in the whole
One of the sparks of night, that fire the air,
And as around thy centre planets roll,
So thou too hast thy path around the Central Soul.

. . . . .

Age o'er thee has no power; — thou bring'st the same
Light to renew the morning, as when first,
If not eternal, thou, with front of flame,
On the dark face of earth in glory burst,
And warmed the seas, and in their bosom nursed
The earliest things of life, the worm and shell;

Till through the sinking ocean, mountains pierced,
And then came forth the land whereon we dwell,
Reared like a magic fane above the watery swell.

. . . . .

Thou lookest on the earth, and then it smiles;
Thy light is hid, and all things droop and mourn;
Laughs the wide sea around her budding isles,
When through their heaven thy changing car is borne;
Thou wheel'st away thy flight, the woods are shorn
Of all their waving locks, and storms awake;
All, that was once so beautiful, is torn
By the wild winds which plough the lonely lake,
And in their maddening rush, the crested mountains shake.

The earth lies buried in a shroud of snow;
Life lingers, and would die, but thy return
Gives to their gladdened hearts an overflow
Of all the power that brooded in the urn
Of their chilled frames, and then they proudly spurn
All bands that would confine, and give to air
Hues, fragrance, shapes of beauty, till they burn,
When on a dewy morn thou dartest there
Rich waves of gold to wreathe with fairer light the fair.

. . . . .

Thine are the mountains, where they purely lift
Snows that have never wasted, in a sky
Which hath no stain; below, the storm may drift
Its darkness, and the thunder-gust roar by;
Aloft in thy eternal smile they lie
Dazzling but cold; thy farewell glance looks there,
And when below thy hues of beauty die
Girt round them as a rosy belt, they bear
Into the high dark vault a brow that still is fair.

The clouds are thine, and all their magic hues
Are pencilled by thee; when thou bendest low,
Or comest in thy strength, thy hand imbues
Their waving fold with such a perfect glow
Of all pure tints, the fairy pictures throw
Shame on the proudest art; the tender stain
Hung round the verge of Heaven, that as a bow
Girds the wide world, and in their blended chain
All tints to the deep gold, that flashes in thy train.

These are thy trophies, and thou bend'st thy arch,
The sign of triumph, in a seven-fold twine,
Where the spent storm is hasting on its march;
And there the glories of thy light combine,
And form with perfect curve a lifted line,
Striding the earth and air;—man looks and tells
How peace and mercy in its beauty shine,
And how the heavenly messenger impels
Her glad wings on the path, that thus in ether swells.

The ocean is thy vassal; thou dost sway
His waves to thy dominion, and they go,
Where thou in Heaven dost guide them on their way,

Rising and falling in eternal flow;
Thou lookest on the waters, and they glow,
They take them wings and spring aloft in air,
And change to clouds, and then, dissolving, throw
Their treasures back to earth, and rushing, tear
The mountain and the vale, as proudly on they bear.

THE CORAL GROVE.

Deep in the wave is a coral grove,
Where the purple mullet and gold-fish rove,
Where the sea-flower spreads its leaves of blue,
That never are wet with falling dew,
But in bright and changeful beauty shine,
Far down in the green and glassy brine.
The floor is of sand, like the mountain drift,
And the pearl-shells spangle the flinty snow;
From coral rocks the sea-plants lift
Their boughs, where the tides and billows flow;
The water is calm and still below,
For the winds and waves are absent there,
And the sands are bright as the stars that glow
In the motionless fields of upper air:
There with its waving blade of green,
The sea-flag streams through the silent water,
And the crimson leaf of the dulse is seen
To blush, like a banner bathed in slaughter:
There with a light and easy motion,
The fan-coral sweeps through the clear deep sea;
And the yellow and scarlet tufts of ocean
Are bending like corn on the upland lea:
And life, in rare and beautiful forms,
Is sporting amid those bowers of stone,
And is safe when the wrathful spirit of storms
Has made the top of the wave his own;
And when the ship from his fury flies,
Where the myriad voices of ocean roar,
When the wind-god frowns in the murky skies,
And demons are waiting the wreck on shore;
Then far below in the peaceful sea,
The purple mullet and gold-fish rove,
Where the waters murmur tranquilly,
Through the bending twigs of the coral grove.

TO SENECA LAKE.

On thy fair bosom, silver lake!
The wild swan spreads his snowy sail,
And round his breast the ripples break,
As down he bears before the gale.

On thy fair bosom, waveless stream!
The dipping paddle echoes far,
And flashes in the moonlight gleam,
And bright reflects the polar star.

The waves along thy pebbly shore,
As blows the north-wind, heave their foam,
And curl around the dashing oar;
As late the boatman hies him home.

How sweet, at set of sun, to view
Thy golden mirror spreading wide,
And see the mist of mantling blue
Float round the distant mountain's side.

At midnight hour, as shines the moon,
A sheet of silver spreads below,
And swift she cuts, at highest noon,
Light clouds, like wreaths of purest snow.

On thy fair bosom, silver lake!
Oh! I could ever sweep the oar,
When early birds at morning wake,
And evening tells us, toil is o'er.

NORA PERRY.

AFTER THE BALL.

THEY sat and combed their beautiful hair,
Their long bright tresses, one by one,
As they laughed and talked in the chamber there,
After the revel was done.

Idly they talked of waltz and quadrille;
Idly they laughed like other girls,
Who over the fire, when all is still,
Comb out their braids and curls.

Robes of satin and Brussels lace,
Knots of flowers and ribbons too,
Scattered about in every place.
For the revel is through.

And Maud and Madge in robes of white,
The prettiest nightgowns under the sun,
Stockingless, slipperless, sit in the night,
For the revel is done.

Sit and comb their beautiful hair,
Those wonderful waves of brown and gold,
Till the fire is out in the chamber there,
And the little bare feet are cold.

Then, out of the gathering winter chill,
All out of the bitter St. Agnes weather,
While the fire is out and the house is still,
Maud and Madge together, —

Maud and Madge in robes of white,
The prettiest nightgowns under the sun,
Curtained away from the chilly night,
After the revel is done! —

Float along in a splendid dream,
To a golden gittern's tinkling tune,
While a thousand lustres shimmering stream,
In a palace's grand saloon.

Flashing of jewels and flutter of laces,
Tropical odors sweeter than musk;
Men and women with beautiful faces
And eyes of tropical dusk, —

And one face shining out like a star,
One face haunting the dreams of each,
And one voice sweeter than others are,
Breaking into silvery speech, —

Telling, through lips of bearded bloom,
An old, old story over again,
As down the royal bannered room,
To the golden gittern's strain,

Two and two, they dreamily walk,
While an unseen spirit walks beside,
And, all unheard in the lovers' talk,
He claimeth one for a bride.

O Maud and Madge, dream on together,
With never a pang of jealous fear!
For, ere the bitter St. Agnes weather
Shall whiten another year,

Robed for the bridal, and robed for the tomb,
Braided brown hair and golden tress,
There'll be only one of you left for the bloom
Of the bearded lips to press, —

Only one for the bridal pearls,
The robe of satin and Brussels lace,
Only one to blush through her curls
At the sight of a lover's face.

O beautiful Madge, in your bridal white,
For you the revel has just begun:

But for her who sleeps in your arms to-night
The revel of life is done!

But, robed and crowned with your saintly bliss,
Queen of heaven and bride of the sun,
O beautiful Maud, you' ll never miss
The kisses another hath won!

IN AN HOUR.

I.

ANTICIPATION.

"I'll take the orchard path," she said,
Speaking lowly, smiling slowly:
The brook was dried within its bed,
The hot sun flung a flame of red
Low in the west as forth she sped.

Across the dried brook-course she went,
Singing lowly, smiling slowly;
She scarcely felt the sun that spent
Its fiery force in swift descent,
She never saw the wheat was bent,

The grasses parched, the blossoms dried;
Singing lowly, smiling slowly,
Her eyes amidst the drouth espied
A summer pleasance far and wide,
With roses and sweet violets pied.

II.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

But homeward coming all the way,
Sighing lowly, pacing slowly.
She knew the bent wheat withering lay,
She saw the blossoms' dry decay,
She missed the little brooklet's play.

A breeze had sprung from out the south,
But, sighing lowly, pacing slowly,
She only felt the burning drouth;
Her eyes were hot and parched her mouth,
Yet sweet the wind blew from the south.

And when the wind brought welcome rain,
Still sighing lowly, pacing slowly,
She never saw the lifting grain,
But only — a lone orchard lane,
Where she had waited all in vain.

TYING HER BONNET UNDER HER CHIN.

Tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied her raven ringlets in;
But not alone in the silken snare
Did she catch her lovely floating hair,
For, tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied a young man's heart within.

They were strolling together up the hill,
Where the wind comes blowing merry and chill;
And it blew the curls a frolicsome race,
All over her happy peach-colored face,
Till, scolding and laughing, she tied them in,
Under her beautiful dimpled chin.

And it blew a color, bright as the bloom
Of the pinkest fuchsia's tossing plume,
All over the cheeks of the prettiest girl
That ever imprisoned a romping curl,
Or, tying her bonnet under her chin,
Tied a young man's heart within.

Steeper and steeper grew the hill;
Madder, merrier, chillier still
The western wind blew down, and played
The wildest tricks with the little maid,
As, tying her bonnet under her chin,
She tied a young man's heart within.

O western wind, do you think it was fair,
To play such tricks with her floating hair?

To gladly, gleefully do your best
To blow her against the young man's breast,
Where he as gladly folded her in,
And kissed her mouth and her dimpled chin?

Ah! Ellery Vane, you little thought,
An hour ago, when you besought
This country lass to walk with you,
After the sun had dried the dew,
What perilous danger you'd be in,
As she tied her bonnet under her chin!

SOME DAY OF DAYS.

Some day; some day of days, threading the street
With idle, heedless pace,
Unlooking for such grace,
I shall behold your face!
Some day, some day of days, thus may we meet.

Perchance the sun may shine from skies of May,
Or winter's icy chill
Touch whitely vale and hill.
What matter? I shall thrill
Through every vein with summer on that day.

Once more life's perfect youth will all come back,
And for a moment there
I shall stand fresh and fair,
And drop the garment care;
Once more my perfect youth will nothing lack.

I shut my eyes now, thinking how 't will be,—
How face to face each soul
Will slip its long control,
Forget the dismal dole
Of dreary Fate's dark separating sea;

And glance to glance, and hand to hand in greeting,
The past with all its fears,
Its silences and tears,
Its lonely, yearning years,
Shall vanish in the moment of that meeting.

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS.

ALL THE RIVERS.

"All the rivers run into the sea."
Like the pulsing of a river,
The motion of a song,
Wind the olden words along
The tortuous turnings of my thoughts whenever
I sit beside the sea.

"All the rivers run into the sea."
O you little leaping river
Laugh on beneath your breath!
With a heart as deep as death,
Strong stream, go patient, grave, and hasting never, —
I sit beside the sea.

"All the rivers run into the sea."
Why the passion of a river?
The striving of a soul?
Calm the eternal waters roll
Upon the eternal shore. At last, whatever
Seeks it — finds the sea.

"All the rivers run into the sea."
O thou bounding, burning river,
Hurrying heart! I seem
To know (so one knows in a dream)
That in the waiting heart of God forever,
Thou too shalt find the sea.

GEORGE ELIOT.

A lily rooted in a sacred soil,
Arrayed with those who neither spin nor toil;
Dinah, the preacher, through the purple air,

Forever, in her gentle evening prayer,
Shall plead for her — what ear too deaf to hear? —
"As if she spoke to some one very near."

And he of storied Florence, whose great heart
Broke for its human error; wrapped apart,
And scorching in the swift, prophetic flame
Of passion for late holiness and shame
Than untried glory grander, gladder, higher —
Deathless, for her, he "testifies by fire."

A statue, fair and firm, on marble feet,
Womanhood's woman, Dorothea, sweet
As strength, and strong as tenderness, to make
A "struggle with the dark" for white light's sake,
Immortal stands, unanswered speaks. Shall they,
Of her great hand the moulded, breathing clay,
Her fit, select, and proud survivors be? —
Possess the life eternal, and not *she?*

DESERTED NESTS.

I'D rather see an empty bough,—
A dreary, weary bough that hung
As boughs will hang within whose arms
No mated birds had ever sung;
Far rather than to see or touch
The sadness of an empty nest
Where joy has been, but is not now;
Where love has been, but is not blest.

There is no sadness in the world,
No other like it here or there, —
The sadness of deserted homes
In nests, or hearts, or anywhere.

A LETTER.

Two things love can do,
Only two:
Can distrust, or can believe;
It can die, or it can live,
There is no syncope
Possible to love or me,
Go your ways!

Two things you can do,
Only two:
Be the thing you used to be,
Or be nothing more to me.
I can but joy or grieve,
Can no more than die or live.
Go your ways!

So far I wrote, my darling, drearily,
But now my sad pen falls down wearily
From out my trembling hand.

I did not, do not, cannot mean it, dear!
Come life or death, joy, grief, or hope, or fear,
I bless you where I stand!

I bless you where I stand, excusing you,
No speech nor language for accusing you
My laggard lips can learn.

To you — be what you are, or can, to me, —
To you or blessedly or fatefully
My heart must turn!

JOHN JAMES PIATT.

READING THE MILESTONE.

I STOPPED to read the milestone here,
A laggard school-boy, long ago;
I came not far — my home was near—
But ah, how far I longed to go!

Behold a number and a name,
A finger, westward, cut in stone:
The vision of a city came,
Across the dust and distance shown.

Around me lay the farms asleep
In hazes of autumnal air,
And sounds that quiet loves to keep
Were heard, and heard not, everywhere.

I read the milestone, day by day:
I yearned to cross the barren bound,
To know the golden Far-away,
To walk the new Enchanted Ground!

TWO PATRONS.

"WHAT shall I sing?" I sighed, and said,
"That men shall know me when my name
Is lost with kindred lips, and dead
Are laurels of familiar fame?"

Below, a violet in the dew
Breathed through the dark its vague perfume;
Above, a star in quiet blue
Touched with a gracious ray the gloom.

"Sing, friend, of me," the violet sighed,
"That I may haunt your grave with love;"
"Sing, friend, of me," the star replied,
"That I may light the dark above."

THE SIGHT OF ANGELS.

THE angels come, the angels go,
Through open doors of purer air;
Their moving presence oftentimes we know,
It thrills us everywhere.

Sometimes we see them; lo! at night,
Our eyes were shut, but opened seem:
The darkness breathed a breath of wondrous light,
And then it was a dream!

THE LOVE-LETTER.

I GREET thee, loving letter —
Unopened, kiss thee free,
And dream her lips within thee
Give back the kiss to me!

The fragrant little rose-leaf,
She sends by thee, is come:
Ah, in her heart was blooming
The rose she stole it from!

THE GOLDEN HAND.

Lo, from the city's heat and dust
A golden hand forever thrust,
Uplifting from a spire on high
A shining finger in the sky!

I see it when the morning brings
Fresh tides of life to living things,
And the great world awakes: behold,
That lifted hand in morning gold!

I see it when the noontide beats
Pulses of fire in busy streets;
The dust flies in the flaming air:
Above, that quiet hand is there.

I see it when the twilight clings
To the dark earth with hovering wings:
Flashing with the last fluttering ray,
That golden hand remembers day.

The midnight comes — the holy hour:
The city like a giant flower
Sleeps full of dew: that hand, in light
Of moon and stars, how weirdly bright!

Below, in many a noisy street
Are toiling hands and striving feet;
The weakest rise, the strongest fall;
That equal hand is over all.

Below, in courts to guard the land,
Gold buys the tongue and binds the hand;
Stealing in God's great scales the gold;
That awful hand, above, behold!

Below, the Sabbaths walk serene
With the great dust of days between;
Preachers within their pulpits stand:
See, over all, that heavenly hand!

But the hot dust, in crowded air
Below, arises never there:
O speech of one who cannot speak!
O Sabbath-witness of the Week!

A SONG OF CONTENT.

The eagle nestles near the sun;
The dove's low nest for me! —
The eagle's on the crag: sweet one,
The dove's in our green tree.
For hearts that beat like thine and mine,
Heaven blesses humble earth;
The angels of our Heaven shall shine
The angels of our hearth!

SARAH M. B. PIATT.

TO-DAY.

Ah, real thing of bloom and breath,
I cannot love you while you stay;
Put on the dim, still charm of death,
Fade to a phantom, float away,
And let me call you Yesterday!

Let empty flower-dust at my feet
Remind me of the buds you wear;
Let the bird's quiet show how sweet
The far-off singing made the air;
And let your dew through frost look fair.

In mourning you I shall rejoice.
Go: for the bitter word may be
A music — in the vanished voice;
And on the dead face I may see
How bright its frown has been to me.

Then in the haunted grass I'll sit,
Half-tearful in your withered place,
And watch your lovely shadow flit
Across To-morrow's sunny face,
And vex her with your perfect grace.

So, real thing of bloom and breath,
I weary of you while you stay.
Put on the dim, still charm of death,
Fade to a phantom, float away,
And let me call you Yesterday!

LAST WORDS.

Good-night, pretty sleepers of mine —
I never shall see you again:
Ah, never in shadow or shine;
Ah, never in dew nor in rain!

In your small dreaming-dresses of white,
With the wild-bloom you gathered to-day
In your quiet shut hands, from the light
And the dark, you will wander away.

Though no graves in the bee-haunted grass,
And no love in the beautiful sky,
Shall take you as yet, you will pass,
With this kiss through these tear-drops. Good-by!

With less gold and more gloom in their hair,
When the buds near have faded to flowers,
Three faces may wake here as fair —
But older than yours are, by hours!

Good-night, then, lost darlings of mine —
I never shall see you again:
Ah, never in shadow nor shine;
Ah, never in dew nor in rain!

A DREAM'S AWAKENING.

Shut in a close and dreary sleep,
Lonely and frightened and oppressed
I felt a dreadful serpent creep,
Writhing and crushing o'er my breast.

I woke and knew my child's sweet arm,
As soft and pure as flakes of snow,
Beneath my dream's dark, hateful charm,
Had been the thing that tortured so.

And in the morning's dew and light
I seemed to hear an angel say,
"The Pain that stings in Time's low night
May prove God's Love in higher day."

THAT NEW WORLD.

How gracious we are to grant to the dead
Those wide, vague lands in the foreign sky,
Reserving this world for ourselves instead —
For we must live, though others must die!

And what is this world that we keep, I pray?
True, it has glimpses of dews and flowers;
Then Youth and Love are here and away,
Like mated birds — but nothing is ours.

Ah, nothing indeed, but we cling to it all.
It is nothing to hear one's own heart beat,
It is nothing to see one's own tears fall;
Yet surely the breath of our life is sweet.

Yes, the breath of our life is so sweet, I fear
We were loath to give it for all we know
Of that charmèd country we hold so dear,
Far into whose beauty the breathless go.

Yet certain we are, when we see them fade
Out of the pleasant light of the sun,
Of the sands of gold in the palm-leaf's shade,
And the strange high jewels all these have won.

You dare not doubt it, O soul of mine!
And yet if these empty eyes could see
One, only one, from that voyage divine,
With something, anything sure for me!

Ah, blow me the scent of one lily, to tell
That it grew outside of this world at most;
Ah, show me a plume to touch, or a shell
That whispers of some unearthly coast!

MAKING PEACE.

After this feud of yours and mine
The sun will shine;
After we both forget, forget,
The sun will set.

I pray you think how warm and sweet
The heart can beat;
I pray you think how soon the rose
From grave-dust grows.

CALLING THE DEAD.

MY little child, so sweet a voice might wake
So sweet a sleeper for so sweet a sake.
Calling your buried brother back to you,
You laugh and listen — till I listen too!

Why does he listen? It may be to hear
Sounds too divine to reach my troubled ear.
Why does he laugh? It may be he can see
The face that only tears can hide from me.

Poor baby faith — so foolish or so wise:
The name I shape out of forlornest cries
He speaks as with a bird's or blossom's breath.
How fair the knowledge is that knows not Death!

Ah, fools and blind — through all the piteous years
Searchers of stars and graves — how many seers,
Calling the dead, and seeking for a sign,
Have laughed and listened, like this child of mine?

THE FLOWERS IN THE GROUND.

UNDER the coffin-lid there are roses:
They bud like dreams in the sleep of the dead;
And the long, vague dark that around them closes
Is flushed and sweet with their glory of red.

From the buried seeds of love they blossom,
All crimson-stained from its blood they start;
And each sleeper wears them on his bosom,
Clasped over the pallid dust of his heart.

When the Angel of Morning shall shake the slumber
Away from the graves with his lighted wings,
He will gather those roses, an infinite number,
And bear them to Heaven, the beautiful things!

ASKING FOR TEARS.

OH, let me come to Thee in this wild way,
Fierce with a grief that will not sleep, to pray
Of all thy treasures, Father, only one,
After which I may say — Thy will be done.

Nay, fear not thou to make my time too sweet;
I nurse a Sorrow,— kiss its hands and feet,
Call it all piteous, precious names, and try,
Awake at night, to hush its helpless cry.

The sand is at my moaning lip, the glare
Of the uplifted desert fills the air;
My eyes are blind and burning, and the years
Stretch on before me. Therefore, give me tears!

JOHN PIERPONT.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

The Pilgrim Fathers — where are they?
The waves that brought them o'er
Still roll in the bay, and throw their spray,
As they break along the shore;
Still roll in the bay, as they rolled that day,
When the Mayflower moored below,
When the sea around was black with storms,
And white the shore with snow.

The mists, that wrapped the Pilgrim's sleep,
Still brood upon the tide;
And the rocks yet keep their watch by the deep,
To stay its waves of pride.
But the snow-white sail, that he gave to the gale,
When the heavens looked dark, is gone; —
As an angel's wing, through an opening cloud,
Is seen and then withdrawn.

The Pilgrim exile — sainted name! —
The hill, whose icy brow
Rejoiced, when he came, in the morning's flame,
In the morning's flame burns now.
And the moon's cold light, as it lay that night
On the hill-side and the sea,
Still lies where he laid his houseless head; —
But the Pilgrim — where is he?

The Pilgrim Fathers are at rest:
When summer is throned on high,
And the world's warm breast is in verdure dressed,
Go, stand on the hill where they lie.
The earliest ray of the golden day,
On that hallowed spot is cast;
And the evening sun, as he leaves the world,
Looks kindly on that spot last.

The Pilgrim *spirit* has not fled:
It walks in noon's broad light;
And it watches the bed of the glorious dead,
With the holy stars by night.
It watches the bed of the brave who have bled,
And shall guard this ice-bound shore,
Till the waves of the bay, where the Mayflower lay,
Shall foam and freeze no more.

MY CHILD.

I cannot make him dead!
His fair sunshiny head
Is ever bounding round my study chair;
Yet, when my eyes, now dim
With tears, I turn to him,
The vision vanishes — he is not there.

I walk my parlor floor,
And, through the open door,
I hear a footfall on the chamber stair,
I' m stepping toward the hall,
To give the boy a call;
And then bethink me that — he is not there:

I thread the crowded street,
A satchelled lad I meet,
With the same beaming eyes and colored hair:
And, as he 's running by,
Follow him with my eye,
Scarcely believing that — he is not there!

I know his face is hid
Under the coffin lid:
Closed are his eyes: cold is his forehead fair;
My hand that marble felt:
O'er it in prayer I knelt
Yet my heart whispers that — he is not there.

I cannot make him dead!
When passing by the bed,
So long watched over with parental care,
My spirit and my eye
Seek him inquiringly,
Before the thought comes that — he is not there!

When, at the cool, gray break
Of day, from sleep I wake,
With my first breathing of the morning air,
My soul goes up, with joy,
To Him who gave my boy;
Then comes the sad thought that — he is not there!

When at the day's calm close,
Before we seek repose,
I'm with his mother, offering up our prayer,
Whate'er I may be saying,
I am in spirit praying
For our boy's spirit, though — he is not there!

Not there! — Where then is he?
The form I used to see
Was but the raiment that he used to wear.
The grave, that now doth press
Upon that cast-off dress,
Is but his wardrobe locked; — he is not there!

He lives! — In all the past
He lives; nor, to the last,
Of seeing him again will I despair;
In dreams I see him now;
And, on his angel brow,
I see it written, "Thou shalt see me *there!*"

Yes, we all live to God!
Father, thy chastening rod
So help us, thine afflicted ones, to bear,
That, in the spirit-land,
Meeting at thy right hand,
'T will be our heaven to find that — he is there!

◆

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

ANNABEL LEE.

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea:
But we loved with a love that was more than love —
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the wingèd seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In the kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of the cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me —
Yes! — that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those that were older than we —
Of many far wiser than we —
And neither the angels in heaven above,

Nor the demons down under the sea.
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling — my darling — my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

THE BELLS.

Hear the sledges with the bells —
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells —
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!
Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
How it swells!
How it dwells
On the future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells.
Bells, bells, bells —
To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

Hear the loud alarum bells —
Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire
Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavor
Now — now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging,
And the clanging.
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling,
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells —
Of the bells —
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells —
In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

Hear the tolling of the bells —
Iron bells!

What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night,
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people—
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in their rolling
On the human heart a stone —
They are neither man nor woman —
They are neither brute nor human;
They are ghouls:
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A pæan from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells!
And he dances, and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the pæan of the bells —
Of the bells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the throbbing of the bells —
Of the bells, bells, bells —
To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,
To the rolling of the bells —
Of the bells, bells, bells,
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells —
Bells, bells, bells —
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

TO MY MOTHER.

Because I feel that, in the heavens above,
The angels, whispering to one another,
Can find, among their burning terms of love,
None so devotional as that of "Mother,"
Therefore by that dear name I long have called you —
You who are more than mother unto me,
And fill my heart of hearts, where death installed you
In setting my Virginia's spirit free.
My mother — my own mother, who died early,
Was but the mother of myself; but you
Are mother to the one I loved so dearly,
And thus are dearer than the mother I knew
By that infinity with which my wife
Was dearer to my soul than its soul-life.

THE RAVEN.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore —
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door —
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow; — vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow — sorrow for the lost Lenore —
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore —
Nameless here for ever more.

And the silken, sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me — filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
"'Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door —
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;
This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you" — here I opened wide the door; —
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into the darkness peering, long I stood there, wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word "Lenore?'
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word "Lenore!" —
Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore —
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore; —
'Tis the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door —
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door —
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly, grim and ancient Raven, wandering from the Nightly shore —
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning — little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door —
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on that placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing farther then he uttered; not a feather then he fluttered —
Till I scarcely more than muttered "Other friends have flown before —
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my hopes have flown before."
Then the bird said "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore —
Till the dirges of his hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never — nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore —
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by seraphim whose footfalls tinkled on the tufted floor.
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee — by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite — respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh, quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! — prophet still, if bird or devil!
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate, yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted —
On this home by horror haunted — tell me truly, I implore —
Is there — *is* there balm in Gilead? — tell me — tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil — prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us — by that God we both adore —
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore —
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting —
"Get thee back into the tempest and the night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken! — quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor,
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted — nevermore!

ROBERT POLLOK.

[*From The Course of Time.*]

LORD BYRON.

He touched his harp, and nations heard, entranced.
As some vast river of unfailing source,
Rapid, exhaustless, deep, his numbers flowed,
And oped new fountains in the human heart.
Where Fancy halted, weary in her flight,
In other men, his, fresh as morning, rose
And soared untrodden heights, and seemed at home,
Where angels bashful looked. Others, though great
Beneath their argument seemed struggling whiles;
He from above descending stooped to touch
The loftiest thought; and proudly stooped, as though
It scarce deserved his verse. With Nature's self
He seemed an old acquaintance, free to jest
At will with all her glorious majesty.
He laid his hand upon "the Ocean's mane,"
And played familiar with his hoary locks;
Stood on the Alps, stood on the Apennines,
And with the thunder talked, as friend to friend;
And wove his garland of the lightning's wing,
In sportive twist, the lightning's fiery wing,
Which, as the footsteps of the dreadful God,
Marching upon the storm in vengeance, seemed;
Then turned, and with the grasshopper, who sung
His evening song beneath his feet, conversed.
Suns, moons, and stars, and clouds, his sisters were;
Rocks, mountains, meteors, seas, and winds, and storms,
His brothers, younger brothers, whom he scarce
As equals deemed. All passions of all men,
The wild and tame, the gentle and severe;
All thoughts, all maxims, sacred and profane;
All creeds, all seasons, Time, Eternity;
All that was hated, all too, that was dear;
All that was hoped, all that was feared, by man;
He tossed about, as tempest-withered leaves,
Then, smiling, looked upon the wreck he made.
With terror now he froze the cowering blood,
And now dissolved the heart in tenderness;
Yet would not tremble, would not weep himself;
But back into his soul retired, alone,
Dark, sullen, proud, gazing contemptuously
On hearts and passions prostrate at his feet.
So Ocean from the plains his waves had late
To desolation swept, retired in pride,
Exulting in the glory of his might,
And seemed to mock the ruin he had wrought.

ALEXANDER POPE.

FROM "ELOISA TO ABELARD."

In these deep solitudes and awful cells,
Where heavenly-pensive Contemplation dwells,
And ever-musing melancholy reigns;
What means this tumult in a vestal's veins?
Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat?
Why feels my heart its long-forgotten heat?
Yet, yet I love!—From Abelard it came,
And Eloisa yet must kiss the name.
Dear fatal name! rest ever unrevealed,
Nor pass these lips, in holy silence sealed:
Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,
Where, mixed with God's, his loved idea lies:
O write it not, my hand—the name appears
Already written—wash it out, my tears!
In vain lost Eloisa weeps and prays,
Her heart still dictates, and her hand obeys.
Relentless walls! whose darksome round contains
Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains:
Ye rugged rocks, which holy knees have worn:
Ye grots and caverns shagged with horrid thorn!
Shrines! where their vigils pale-eyed virgins keep,
And pitying saints, whose statues learn to weep!
Though cold like you, unmoved and silent grown,
I have not yet forgot myself to stone.
All is not Heaven's while Abelard has part,
Still rebel nature holds out half my heart;
Nor prayers nor fasts its stubborn pulse restrain,
Nor tears for ages taught to flow in vain.
Soon as thy letters trembling I unclose,
That well-known name awakens all my woes.
Oh, name, for ever sad! for ever dear!
Still breathed in sighs, still ushered with a tear.
I tremble, too, whene'er my own I find;
Some dire misfortune follows close behind.
Line after line my gushing eyes o'erflow,
Led through a sad variety of woe:
Now warm in love, now withering in my bloom,
Lost in a convent's solitary gloom!
There stern religion quenched the unwilling flame,
There died the best of passions, love and fame.
Yet write, oh! write me all, that I may join
Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine.
Nor foes nor fortune take this power away;
And is my Abelard less kind than they?
Tears still are mine, and those I need not spare,
Love but demands what else were shed in prayer;
No happier task these faded eyes pursue;
To read and weep is all they now can do.
Then share thy pain, allow that sad relief;
Ah, more than share it! give me all thy grief.
Heaven first taught letters for some wretch's aid,
Some banished lover, or some captive maid;
They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires,

The virgin's wish without her fears impart,
Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart,
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh from Indus to the Pole.

[*From An Essay on Man.*]

MAN.

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan,
The proper study of mankind is Man.
Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise, and rudely great;
With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act or rest;
In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reasoning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little, or too much;
Chaos of thought and passion, all confused
Still by himself abused, or disabused;
Created half to rise, and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled:
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!

[*From An Essay on Man.*]

SUBMISSION TO SUPREME WISDOM.

What if the foot, ordained the dust to tread,
Or hand, to toil, aspired to be the head?
What if the head, the eye, or ear repined
To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?
Just as absurd for any part to claim
To be another, in this general frame:
Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains,
The great directing Mind of All ordains.
All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul;
That, changed through all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the earth, as in the ethereal frame,
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent;
Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect, in a hair as heart;
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt seraph, that adores and burns;
To Him no high, no low, no great, no small;
He fills, He bounds, connects, and equals all.
Cease then, nor order imperfection name:
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
Know thy own point: this kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, Heaven bestows on thee.
Submit.— In this, or any other sphere,
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear:
Safe in the hand of one disposing power,
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.
All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;

All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good:
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, *Whatever is, is right.*

[*From An Essay on Man.*]

CHARITY, GRADUALLY PERVASIVE.

God loves from whole to parts; but human soul
Must rise from individual to the whole.
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads;
Friend, parent, neighbor, first it will embrace;
His country next, and next all human race;
Wide, and more wide, the o'erflowings of the mind
Take every creature in, of every kind;
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And heaven beholds its image in his breast.

[*From An Essay on Man.*]

TRUE NOBILITY.

Honor and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all the honor lies.
Fortune in men has some small difference made,
One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;
The cobbler aproned, and the parson gowned,
The friar hooded, and the monarch crowned.
"What differ more (you cry) than crown and cowl!"
I'll tell you, friend! a wise man and a fool.
You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,
Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,
Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow;
The rest is all but leather or prunello.

[*From An Essay on Man.*]

VIRTUE, THE SOLE UNFAILING HAPPINESS.

Know then this truth (enough for man to know),
"Virtue alone is happiness below."
The only point where human bliss stands still,
And tastes the good without the fall to ill;
Where only merit constant pay receives,
Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives;
The joy unequalled, if its end it gain,
And if it lose, attended with no pain:
Without satiety, though e'er so blest,
And but more relished as the more distressed:
The broadest mirth, unfeeling Folly wears,
Less pleasing far than Virtue's very tears:
Good, from each object, from each place acquired,
For ever exercised, yet never tired;
Never elated, while one man's oppressed;
Never dejected, while another's blessed;
And where no wants, no wishes can remain,
Since but to wish more virtue, is to gain.
See the sole bliss, Heaven could on all bestow!
Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can know:
Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,
The bad must miss; the good, untaught, will find;

Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
But looks through nature up to nature's God;
Pursues that chain which links the immense design,
Joins heaven and earth, and mortal and divine;
Sees that no being any bliss can know,
But touches some above, and some below;
Learns from this union of the rising whole,
The first, last purpose of the human soul;
And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,
All end, in *love of God and love of man.*

[*From An Essay on Criticism.*]

TRUTH TO NATURE.

First follow Nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same;
Unerring Nature, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchanged, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of art.

[*From An Essay on Criticism.*]

JUST JUDGMENT.

Whoever thinks a faultless piece to see,
Thinks what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.
In every work regard the writer's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend;
And if the means be just, the conduct true,
Applause, in spite of trivial faults, is due.
As men of breeding, sometimes men of wit,
To avoid great errors, must the less commit;
Neglect the rules each verbal critic lays,
For not to know some trifles is a praise.

[*From An Essay on Criticism.*]

WIT.

True wit is nature to advantage dressed;
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed:
Something, whose truth, convinced at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind.
As shades more sweetly recommend the light,
So modest plainness sets off sprightly wit.
For works may have more wit than does them good,
As bodies perish through excess of blood.

[*From An Essay on Criticism.*]

EXCESSIVE PRAISE OR BLAME.

Avoid extremes; and shun the fault of such
Who still are pleased too little or too much.
At every trifle scorn to take offence,
That always shows great pride or little sense:
Those heads, as stomachs, are not sure the best
Which nauseate all, and nothing can digest.
Yet let not each gay turn thy rapture move:
For fools admire, but men of sense approve:
As things seem large which we through mist descry,
Dulness is ever apt to magnify.

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

Father of all! in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou great First Cause, least understood,
Who all my sense confined
To know but this, that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind;

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill;
And binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heaven pursue.

What blessings Thy free bounty gives,
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives;
To enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think Thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round.

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge Thy foe.

If I am right, Thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, oh, teach my heart
To find that better way!

Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At aught Thy wisdom has denied,
Or aught Thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see:
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quickened by Thy breath;
Oh, lead me wheresoe'er I go,
Through this day's life or death!

This day, be bread and peace my lot:
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not,
And let Thy will be done.

To Thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar, earth, sea, skies!
One chorus let all Being raise!
All Nature's incense rise!

Mary N. Prescott.

THE OLD STORY.

By the pleasant paths we know
All familiar flowers would grow,
Though we two were gone;
Moon and stars would rise and set,
Dawn the laggard night forget,
And the world move on.

Spring would carol through the wood,
Life be counted sweet and good,
Winter storms would prove their
While the seasons sped; [might,
Winter frosts make bold to bite,
Clouds lift overhead.

Still the sunset lights would glow,
Still the heaven-appointed bow
In its place be hung;
Not one flower the less would bloom
Though we two had met our doom,
No song less be sung.

Other lovers through the dew
Would go, loitering, two and two,
When the day was done;
Lips would pass the kiss divine,
Hearts would beat like yours and mine, —
Hearts that beat as one.

TO-DAY.

To-day the sunshine freely showers
Its benediction where we stand;
There's not a passing cloud that lowers
Above this pleasant summer land;
Then let's not waste the sweet to-day, —
To-morrow, who can say?

Perhaps, to-morrow we may be,—
Alas! alas! the thought is pain, —
As far apart as sky and sea,
Sundered to meet no more again;
Then let us clasp thee, sweet to-day, —
To-morrow, who can say?

The daylight fades; a purple dream
Of twilight hovers overhead,
While all the trembling stars but seem
Like sad tears yet unshed;
Oh, sweet to-day, so soon away!
To-morrow, who can say?

ASLEEP.

Sound asleep! no sigh can reach
Him who dreams the heavenly dream;
No to-morrow's silver speech
Wake him with an earthly theme.
Summer rains, relentlessly,
Patter where his head doth lie.
There the wild rose and the brake
All their summer leisure take.
Violets, blinded by the dew,
Perfume lend to the sad rue,
Till the day break fair and clear,
And no shadow doth appear.

MARGARET JUNKIN PRESTON.

EQUIPOISE.

Just when we think we've fixed the golden mean, —
The diamond point, on which to balance fair
Life and life's lofty issues, weighing there,
With fractional precision, close and keen,
Thought, motive, word and deed, — there comes between
Some wayward circumstance, some jostling care,
Some temper's fret, some mood's unwise despair,
To mar the equilibrium, unforeseen,
And spoil our nice adjustment! — Happy he,
Whose soul's calm equipoise can know no jar,
Because the unwavering hand that holds the scales,
Is the same hand that weighed each steadfast star, —
Is the same hand that on the sacred tree
Bore, for his sake, the anguish of the nails!

OURS.

Most perfect attribute of love, that knows
No separate self, — no conscious *mine* nor *thine*;
But mystic union, closer, more divine
Than wedded soul and body can disclose.
No flush of pleasure on thy forehead glows,
No mist of feeling in thine eyes can shine,
No faintest pain surprise thee, but there goes
The lightning-spark along love's viewless line,
Bearing with instant message to my heart,
Responsive recognition. Suns or showers
May come between us; silences may part;
The rushing world know not, nor care to know; —
Yet back and forth the flashing secrets go,
Whose sacred, only sesame is, *ours!*

NATURE'S LESSON.

PAIN is no longer pain when it is past;
And what is all the mirth of yesterday,
More than the yester flush that paled away,
Leaving no trace across the landscape cast
Whereby to prove its presence there? The blast
That bowed the knotted oak beneath its sway,
And rent the lissome ash, the forest may
Take heed of longer, since strewn leaves outlast
Strewn sunbeams even. Be thou like Nature then,
Calmly receptive of all sweet delights,
The while they soothe and strengthen thee: and when
The wrench of trial comes with swirl and strain,
Think of the still progressive days and nights,
That blot with equal sweep, both joy and pain.

GOD'S PATIENCE.

OF all the attributes whose starry rays
Converge and centre in one focal light
Of luminous glory such as angels' sight
Can only look on with a blenched amaze,
None crowns the brow of God with purer blaze,
Nor lifts His grandeur to more infinite height,
Than His exhaustless patience. Let us praise
With wondering hearts, this strangest tenderest grace,
Remembering, awe-struck, that the avenging rod
Of justice must have fallen, and mercy's plan
Been frustrate, had not Patience stood between,
Divinely meek: And let us learn that man,
Toiling, enduring, pleading, — calm, serene,
For those who scorn and slight, is likest God.

THE SHADOW.

IT comes betwixt me and the amethyst
Of yon far mountain's billowy range; — the sky,
Mild with sun-setting calmness, to my eye
Is curtained ever by its haunting mist;
And oftentimes when some dear brow I've kissed,
My lips grow tremulous as it sweeps me by,
With stress of overmastering agony
That faith and reason all in vain resist.
It blurs my fairest books; it dims the page
Of the divinest lore; and on my tongue
The broken prayer that inward strength would crave,
Dissolves in sobs no soothing can assuage;
And this penumbral gloom, — this heart-cloud flung
Around me is, the memory of a grave.

STONEWALL JACKSON'S GRAVE.

A SIMPLE, sodded mound of earth,
Without a line above it;
With only daily votive flowers
To prove that any love it:
The token flag that silently
Each breeze's visit numbers,
Alone keeps martial ward above
The hero's dreamless slumbers.

No name? — no record? Ask the world;
The world has read his story: —

If all its annals can unfold
A prouder tale of glory;
If ever merely human life
Hath taught diviner moral, —
If ever round a worthier brow
Was twined a purer laurel!

A twelvemonth only, since his sword
Went flashing through the battle, —
A twelvemonth only, since his ear
Heard war's last deadly rattle, —
And yet, have countless pilgrim feet
The pilgrim's guerdon paid him,
And weeping women come to see
The place where they have laid him.

Contending armies bring in turn,
Their meed of praise or honor,
And Pallas here has paused to bind
The cypress-wreath upon her:
It seems a holy sepulchre,
Whose sanctities can waken
Alike the love of friend or foe —
Of Christian or of pagan.

. . . . . .

But who shall weigh the wordless grief
That leaves in tears its traces,
As round their leader crowd again
The bronzed and veteran faces?
The "Old Brigade" he loved so well —
The mountain men, who bound him
With bays of their own winning, ere
A tardier fame had crowned him;

The legions who had seen his glance
Across the carnage flashing
And thrilled to catch his ringing "*charge*"
Above the volley crashing; —
Who oft had watched the lifted hand,
The inward trust betraying,
And felt their courage grow sublime,
While they beheld him praying!

. . . . . .

Rare fame! rare name! — If chanted praise,
With all the world to listen, —
If pride that swells a nation's soul, —
If foemen's tears that glisten, —
If pilgrim's shrining love, — if grief
Which naught may soothe or sever, —
If *these* can consecrate, — this spot
Is sacred ground forever!

THERE'LL COME A DAY.

There'll come a day when the supremest splendor
Of earth, or sky, or sea,
Whate'er their miracles, sublime or tender,
Will wake no joy in me.

There'll come a day when all the aspiration,
Now with such fervor fraught,
As lifts to heights of breathless exaltation,
Will seem a thing of naught.

There'll come a day when riches, honor, glory,
Music and song and art,
Will look like puppets in a worn-out story,
Where each has played his part.

There'll come a day when human love, the sweetest
Gift that includes the whole
Of God's grand giving — sovereignest, completest —
Shall fail to fill my soul.

There'll come a day — I will not care how passes
The cloud across my sight,
If only, lark-like, from earth's nested grasses,
I spring to meet its light.

THE TYRANNY OF MOOD.

I. MORNING.

It is enough: I feel, this golden morn,
As if a royal appanage were mine,
Through Nature's queenly warrant of divine
Investiture. What princess, palace-born,

Hath right of rapture more, when skies adorn
Themselves so grandly; when the mountains shine
Transfigured; when the air exalts like wine;
When pearly purples steep the yellowing corn?
So satisfied with all the goodliness
Of God's good world, — my being to its brim
Surcharged with utter thankfulness no less
Than bliss of beauty, passionately glad
Through rush of tears that leaves the landscape dim,—
"Who dares," I say, "in such a world be sad?"

II. NIGHT.

I PRESS my cheek against the window-pane,
And gaze abroad into the blank, black space
Where earth and sky no more have any place,
Wiped from existence by the expunging rain;
And as I hear the worried winds complain,
A darkness, darker than the mirk whose trace
Invades the curtained room, is on my face,
Beneath which, life and life's best ends seem vain.
My swelling aspirations viewless sink
As yon cloud-blotted hills: hopes that shone bright
As planets yester-eve, like them to-night
Are gulfed, the impenetrable mists before:
"O weary world!" I cry, "how dare I think
Thou hast for me one gleam of gladness more?"

THOMAS PRINGLE.

AFAR IN THE DESERT.

AFAR in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent bush-boy alone by my side,
When the sorrows of life the soul o'ercast,
And, sick of the present, I cling to the past;
When the eye is suffused with regretful tears,
From the fond recollections of former years;
And shadows of things that have long since fled
Flit over the brain, like the ghosts of the dead;
Bright visions of glory that vanished too soon;
Day-dreams that departed ere manhood's noon;
Attachments by fate or falsehood reft;
Companions of early days lost or left —
And my native land — whose magical name
Thrills to the heart like electric flame;
The home of my childhood: the haunts of my prime:
All the passions and scenes of that rapturous time
When the feelings were young, and the world was new,
Like the fresh bowers of Eden unfolding to view;
Ah — all now forsaken — forgotten — foregone!
And I — a lone exile remembered of none —
My high aims abandoned — my good acts undone —
Aweary of all that is under the sun,—
With that sadness of heart which no stranger may scan,
I fly to the desert afar from man.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent bush-boy alone by my side,

When the wild turmoil of this wearisome life,
With its scenes of oppression, corruption, and strife —
The proud man's frown, and the base man's fear —
The scorner's laugh, and the sufferer's tear —
And malice, and meanness, and falsehood and folly,
Dispose me to musing and dark melancholy;
When my bosom is full, and my thoughts are high,
And my soul is sick with the bondman's sigh —
Oh! then there is freedom, and joy and pride,
Afar in the desert alone to ride!
There is rapture to vault on the champing steed,
And to bound away with the eagle's speed,
With the death-fraught firelock in my hand —
The only law of the desert land!

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent bush-boy alone by my side,
Away — away from the dwellings of men,
By the wild deer's haunt, by the buffalo's glen;
By valleys remote where the oriby plays
Where the gnu, the gazelle, and the hartèbeest graze,
And the kùdù and eland unhunted recline
By the skirts of gray forest o'erhung with wild vine!
Where the elephant browses at peace in his wood,
And the river-horse gambols unscared in the flood.
And the mighty rhinoceros wallows at will
In the fen where the wild ass is drinking his fill.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent bush-boy alone by my side,
O'er the brown karroo, where the bleating cry
Of the springbok's fawn sounds plaintively;
And the timorous quagga's shrill whistling neigh
Is heard by the fountain at twilight gray;
Where the zebra wantonly tosses his mane,
With wild hoof scouring the desolate plain;
And the fleet-footed ostrich over the waste
Speeds like a horseman who travels in haste,
Hieing away to the home of her rest,
Where she and her mate have scooped their nest,
Far hid from the pitiless plunderer's view
In the pathless depths of the parched karroo.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent bush-boy alone by my side.
Away — away — in the wilderness vast,
Where the white man's foot hath never passed,
And the quivered Coranna or Bechuan
Hath rarely crossed with his roving clan;
A region of emptiness, howling and drear,
Which man hath abandoned from famine and fear;
Which the snake and the lizard inhabit alone,
With the twilight bat from the yawning stone;
Where grass, nor herb, nor shrub takes root,
Save poisonous thorns that pierce the foot:
And the bitter-melon, for food and drink,
Is the pilgrim's fare by the salt-lake's brink;
A region of drought, where no river glides,
Nor rippling brook with osiered sides;

Where sedgy pool, nor bubbling fount,
Nor tree, nor cloud, nor misty mount,
Appears, to refresh the aching eye;
But the barren earth and the burning sky,
And the blank horizon, round and round,
Spread — void of living sight or sound.

And here, while the night-winds round me sigh,
And the stars burn bright in the midnight sky,
As I sit apart by the desert stone,
Like Elijah at Horeb's cave, alone,
"A still small voice" comes through the wild
(Like a father consoling his fretful child),
Which banishes bitterness, wrath, and fear, —
Saying — Man is distant, but God is near!

MATTHEW PRIOR.

[*From Solomon.*]

THE WISE MAN IN DARKNESS.

Happy the mortal man, who now at last
Has through the doleful vale of misery passed;
Who to his destined stage has carried on
The tedious load, and laid his burdens down;
Whom the cut brass or mounded marble shows
Victor o'er life and all her train of woes.
He happier yet, who, privileged by fate
To shorter labor, and a lighter weight,
Received but yesterday the gift of breath,
Ordered to-morrow to return to death.
But oh! beyond description, happiest he
Who ne'er must roll on life's tumultuous sea;
Who with blessed freedom from the general doom
Exempt, must never force the teeming womb,
Nor see the sun, nor sink into the tomb.
Who breathes must suffer; and who thinks must mourn;
And he alone is blest who ne'er was born.

[*From Solomon.*]

THE WISE MAN IN LIGHT.

Supreme, all-wise, eternal Potentate!
Sole Author, sole Dispenser of our fate!
Enthroned in light and immortality!
Whom no man fully sees, and none can see!
Original of beings! Power divine!
Since that I live, and that I think, is Thine;
Benign Creator, let Thy plastic hand
Dispose its own effect. Let Thy command
Restore, great Father, Thy instructed son;
And in my act, may Thy great will be done!

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER.

ONE BY ONE.

One by one the sands are flowing,
One by one the moments fall;
Some are coming, some are going,
Do not strive to grasp them all.

One by one thy duties wait thee,
Let thy whole strength go to each,
Let no future dreams elate thee,
Learn thou first what these can teach.

One by one (bright gifts from Heaven)
Joys are sent thee here below;
Take them readily when given,
Ready too to let them go.

One by one thy griefs shall meet thee.
Do not fear an armèd band;
One will fade as others greet thee;
Shadows passing through the land.

Do not look at life's long sorrow;
See how small each moment's pain,
God will help thee for to-morrow,
So each day begin again.

Every hour that fleets so slowly
Has its task to do or bear;
Luminous the crown, and holy,
When each gem is set with care.

Do not linger with regretting,
Or for passing hours despond;
Nor, the daily toil forgetting,
Look too eagerly beyond.

Hours are golden links, God's token,
Reaching heaven; but one by one
Take them, lest the chain be broken
Ere the pilgrimage be done.

JUDGE NOT.

Judge not; the workings of his brain
And of his heart thou canst not see;
What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,
In God's pure light may only be
A scar, brought from some well-won field,
Where thou wouldst only faint and yield.

The look, the air, that frets thy sight,
May be a token, that below
The soul has closed in deadly fight
With some infernal fiery foe,
Whose glance would scorch thy smiling grace,
And cast thee shuddering on thy face!

The fall thou darest to despise,—
May be the angel's slackened hand
Has suffered it, that he may rise
And take a firmer, surer stand;
Or, trusting less to earthly things,
May henceforth learn to use his wings.

And judge none lost; but wait and see,
With hopeful pity, not disdain;
The depth of the abyss may be
The measure of the height of pain
And love and glory that may raise
This soul to God in after days!

THANKFULNESS.

My God, I thank Thee who hast made
The earth so bright;
So full of splendor and of joy,
Beauty and light;
So many glorious things are here,
Noble and right!

I thank Thee, too, that Thou hast made
Joy to abound;
So many gentle thoughts and deeds
Circling us round,
That in the darkest spot of earth
Some love is found.

I thank Thee *more* that all our joy
Is touched with pain;
That shadows fall on brightest hours;
That thorns remain;
So that earth's bliss may be our guide,
And not our chain.

For Thou who knowest, Lord, how soon
Our weak heart clings,
Hast given us joys, tender and true,
Yet all with wings,
So that we see, gleaming on high,
Diviner things!

I thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast kept
The best in store;
We have enough, yet not too much
To long for more:
A yearning for a deeper peace,
Not known before.

I thank Thee, Lord, that here our souls
Though amply blest,
Can never find, although they seek,
A perfect rest,—
Nor ever shall, until they lean
On Jesus' breast!

A LOST CHORD.

SEATED one day at the organ,
I was weary and ill at ease,
And my fingers wandered idly
Over the noisy keys.

I do not know what I was playing,
Or what I was dreaming then;
But I struck one chord of music,
Like the sound of a great Amen.

It flooded the crimson twilight,
Like the close of an angel's psalm,
And it lay on my fevered spirit
With a touch of infinite calm.

It quieted pain and sorrow,
Like love overcoming strife;
It seemed the harmonious echo
From our discordant life.

It linked all perplexed meanings
Into one perfect peace,
And trembled away into silence
As if it were loth to cease.

I have sought, but I seek it vainly,
That one lost chord divine,
That came from the soul of the organ,
And entered into mine.

It may be that death's bright angel
Will speak in that chord again,
It may be that only in heaven
I shall hear that grand Amen.

TOO LATE.

HUSH! speak low; tread softly;
Draw the sheet aside;—
Yes, she does look peaceful;
With that smile she died.

Yet stern want and sorrow
Even now you trace
On the wan, worn features
Of the still white face.

Restless, helpless, hopeless,
Was her bitter part;—
Now,—how still the violets
Lie upon her heart!

She who toiled and labored
For her daily bread;
See the velvet hangings
Of this stately bed.

Yes, they did forgive her;
Brought her home at last;
Strove to cover over
Their relentless past.

Ah, they would have given
Wealth, and home, and pride,
To see her just look happy
Once before she died!

They strove hard to please her,
But, when death is near,
All you know is deadened,
Hope, and joy, and fear.

And besides, one sorrow
  Deeper still,—one pain
Was beyond them: healing
  Came to-day,—in vain!

If she had but lingered
  Just a few hours more;
Or had this letter reached her
  Just one day before!

I can almost pity
  Even him to-day;
Though he let this anguish
  Eat her heart away.

Yet she never blamed him:—
  One day you shall know
How this sorrow happened;
  It was long ago.

I have read the letter;
  Many a weary year,
For one word she hungered,—
  There are thousands here.

If she could but hear it,
  Could but understand;
See,—I put the letter
  In her cold white hand.

Even these words, so longed for,
  Do not stir her rest;
Well, I should not murmur,
  For God judges best.

She needs no more pity,—
  But I mourn his fate,
When he hears his letter
  Came a day too late.

CLEANSING FIRES.

Let thy gold be cast in the furnace,
  Thy red gold, precious and bright,
Do not fear the hungry fire,
  With its caverns of burning light;
And thy gold shall return more precious,
  Free from every spot and stain;
For gold must be tried by fire,
  As a heart must be tried by pain!

In the cruel fire of sorrow,
  Cast thy heart, do not faint or wail;
Let thy hand be firm and steady,
  Do not let thy spirit quail:
But wait till the trial is over,
  And take thy heart again;
For as gold is tried by fire,
  So a heart must be tried by pain!

I shall know by the gleam and glitter
  Of the golden chain you wear,
By your heart's calm strength in loving,
  Of the fire they have had to bear.
Beat on, true heart, forever;
  Shine bright, strong golden chain;
And bless the cleansing fire,
  And the furnace of living pain!

A WOMAN'S QUESTION.

Before I trust my fate to thee,
  Or place my hand in thine,
Before I let thy future give
  Color and form to mine,
Before I peril all for thee,
  Question thy soul to-night for me.

I break all slighter bonds, nor feel
  A shadow of regret:
Is there one link within the past
  That holds thy spirit yet?
Or is thy faith as clear and free
  As that which I can pledge to thee?

Does there within thy dimmest dreams
  A possible future shine,
Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe,
  Untouched, unshared by mine?
If so, at any pain or cost,
  Oh, tell me before all is lost.

Look deeper still. If thou canst feel
  Within thy inmost soul,
That thou hast kept a portion back
  While I have staked the whole;
Let no false pity spare the blow,
  But in true mercy tell me so.

Is there within thy heart a need
  That mine cannot fulfil?
One chord that any other hand
  Could better wake or still?
Speak now,—lest at some future day
  My whole life wither and decay.

Lives there within thy nature hid
  The demon-spirit Change,
Shedding a passing glory still
  On all things new and strange?
It may not be thy fault alone,—
  But shield my heart against thy own.

Couldst thou withdraw thy hand one day
  And answer to my claim,
That fate, and that to-day's mistake,
  Not thou,—had been to blame?
Some soothe their conscience thus; but thou
  Wilt surely warn and save me now.

Nay, answer *not*,— I dare not hear,
  The words would come too late;
Yet I would spare thee all remorse,
  So, comfort thee, my fate,—
Whatever on my heart may fall,—
  Remember, I *would* risk it all!

INCOMPLETENESS.

Nothing resting in its own completeness
Can have worth or beauty: but alone
Because it leads and tends to farther sweetness,
Fuller, higher, deeper than its own.

Spring's real glory dwells not in the meaning,
Gracious though it be, of her blue hours;
But is hidden in her tender leaning
To the summer's richer wealth of flowers.

Dawn is fair, because the mists fade slowly
Into day, which floods the world with light;
Twilight's mystery is so sweet and holy
Just because it ends in starry night.

Childhood's smiles unconscious graces borrow
From strife, that in a far-off future lies;
And angel glances (veiled now by life's sorrow)
Draw our hearts to some belovèd eyes.

Life is only bright when it proceedeth
Towards a truer, deeper life above;
Human love is sweetest when it leadeth
To a more divine and perfect love.

Learn the mystery of progression duly:
Do not call each glorious change, decay;
But know we only hold our treasures truly,
When it seems as if they passed away.

Nor dare to blame God's gifts for incompleteness;
In that want their beauty lies: they roll
Towards some infinite depth of love and sweetness,
Bearing onward man's reluctant soul.

STRIVE, WAIT, AND PRAY.

Strive: yet I do not promise
  The prize you dream of to-day
Will not fade when you think to grasp it,
  And melt in your hand away;
But another and holier treasure,
  You would now perchance disdain,
Will come when your toil is over,
  And pay you for all your pain.

Wait; yet I do not tell you
  The hour you long for now
Will not come with its radiance vanished,
  And a shadow upon its brow;

Yet far through the misty future,
With a crown of starry light,
An hour of joy you know not
Is winging her silent flight.

Pray; though the gift you ask for
May never comfort your fears,
May never repay your pleading,
Yet pray, and with hopeful tears;
An answer, not that you long for,
But diviner, will come one day;
Your eyes are too dim to see it,
Yet strive, and wait, and pray.

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER (BARRY CORNWALL).

LIFE.

We are born; we laugh; we weep;
We love; we droop; we die!
Ah! wherefore do we laugh or weep?
Why do we live or die?
Who knows that secret deep?
Alas, not I!

Why doth the violet spring
Unseen by human eye?
Why do the radiant seasons bring
Sweet thoughts that quickly fly?
Why do our fond hearts cling
To things that die?

We toil — through pain and wrong;
We fight — and fly;
We love; we lose; and then, ere long,
Stone-dead we lie.
O Life! is all thy song!
"Endure and — die?"

A PETITION TO TIME.

Touch us gently, Time!
Let us glide adown thy stream
Gently — as we sometimes glide
Through a quiet dream!
Humble voyagers are we,
Husband, wife, and children three —
(One is lost — an angel, fled
To the azure overhead!)

Touch us gently, Time!
We've not proud nor soaring wings;
Our ambition, our content,
Lies in simple things.
Humble voyagers are we,
O'er life's dim unsounded sea,
Seeking only some calm clime;
Touch us gently, gentle Time!

LOVE ME IF I LIVE.

Love me if I live!
Love me if I die!
What to me is life or death,
So that thou be nigh?

Once I loved thee rich,
Now I love thee poor;
Ah! what is there I could not
For thy sake endure?

Kiss me for my love!
Pay me for my pain!
Come! and murmur in my ear
How thou lov'st again!

THE SEA.

The sea! the sea! the open sea!
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!
Without a mark, without a bound,
It runneth the earth's wide regions round!
It plays with the clouds; it mocks the skies;
Or like a cradled creature lies.

I'm on the sea! I'm on the sea!
I am where I would ever be;
With the blue above, and the blue below,
And silence wheresoe'er I go;

If a storm should come and awake the deep,
What matter? *I* shall ride and sleep.

I love, oh, *how* I love to ride
On the fierce, foaming, bursting tide,
When every mad wave drowns the moon,
Or whistles aloft his tempest tune,
And tells how goeth the world below,
And why the sou'west blasts do blow.

I never was on the dull, tame shore,
But I loved the great sea more and more,
And backward flew to her billowy breast,
Like a bird that seeketh its mother's nest;
And a mother she *was*, and *is*, to me;
For I was born on the open sea!

The waves were white, and red the morn,
In the noisy hour when I was born;
And the whale it whistled, the porpoise rolled,
And the dolphins bared their backs of gold;
And never was heard such an outcry wild
As welcomed to life the ocean child!

I've lived since then, in calm and strife,
Full fifty summers, a sailor's life,
With wealth to spend and a power to range,
But never have sought nor sighed for change;
And Death, whenever he comes to me,
Shall come on the wild, unbounded sea!

HISTORY OF A LIFE.

DAY dawned: —within a curtained room,
Filled to faintness with perfume,
A lady lay at point of doom.

Day closed; — a child had seen the light;
But, for the lady fair and bright,
She rested in undreaming night.

Spring rose; the lady's grave was green;
And near it, oftentimes, was seen
A gentle boy with thoughtful mien.

Years fled; — he wore a manly face,
And struggled in the world's rough race,
And won at last a lofty place.

And then he died! Behold before ye
Humanity's poor sum and story;
Life, — Death, — and all that is of glory.

A PRAYER IN SICKNESS.

SEND down Thy wingèd angel, God!
Amid this night so wild;
And bid him come where now we watch,
And breathe upon our child!

She lies upon her pillow, pale,
And moans within her sleep,
Or wakeneth with a patient smile,
And striveth not to weep.

How gentle and how good a child
She is, we know too well,
And dearer to her parents' hearts
Than our weak words can tell.

We love — we watch throughout the night,
To aid, when need may be;
We hope — and have despaired, at times;
But now we turn to Thee!

Send down Thy sweet-souled angel, God!
Amid the darkness wild;
And bid him soothe our souls to-night,
And heal our gentle child!

THE POET'S SONG TO HIS WIFE.

How many summers, love,
Have I been thine?
How many days, thou dove,
Hast thou been mine?

Time, like the wingèd wind
When 't bends the flowers,
Hath left no mark behind,
To count the hours!

Some weight of thought, though loath,
On thee he leaves;
Some lines of care round both
Perhaps he weaves;
Some fears, — a soft regret
For joys scarce known;
Sweet looks we half forget;—
All else is flown!

Ah!— With what thankless heart
I mourn and sing!
Look, where our children start,
Like sudden spring!
With tongues all sweet and low
Like pleasant rhyme,
They tell how much I owe
To thee and time!

SOFTLY WOO AWAY HER BREATH.

Softly woo away her breath,
Gentle death!
Let her leave thee with no strife,
Tender, mournful, murmuring life!
She hath seen her happy day, —
She hath had her bud and blossom;
Now she pales and shrinks away,
Earth, into thy gentle bosom!

She hath done her bidding here,
Angels dear!
Bear her perfect soul above,
Seraph of the skies, — sweet love!
Good she was, and fair in youth;
And her mind was seen to soar,
And her heart was wed to truth:
Take her, then, forevermore, —
Forever — evermore, —

I DIE FOR THY SWEET LOVE.

I die for thy sweet love! The ground
Not panteth so for summer rain,
As I for one soft look of thine;
And yet,— I sigh in vain!

A hundred men are near thee now;
Each one, perhaps, surpassing me;
But who doth feel a thousandth part
Of what I feel for thee?

They look on thee, as men will look,
Who round the wild world laugh and rove;
I only think how sweet 'twould be
To *die* for thy sweet love!

EDNA DEAN PROCTOR.

BUT HEAVEN, O LORD, I CANNOT LOSE.

Now summer finds her perfect prime!
Sweet blows the wind from western calms;
On every bower red roses climb;
The meadows sleep in mingled balms.
Nor stream, nor bank the wayside by,
But lilies float and daisies throng,
Nor space of blue and sunny sky
That is not cleft with soaring song.
O flowery morns, O tuneful eves,
Fly swift! my soul ye cannot fill!
Bring the ripe fruit, the garnered sheaves,
The drifting snows on plain and hill.
Alike to me, fall frosts and dews;
But Heaven, O Lord, I cannot lose!

Warm hands to-day are clasped in mine;
Fond hearts my mirth or mourning share:

And, over hope's horizon line,
The future dawns, serenely fair;
Yet still, though fervent vow denies,
I know the rapture will not stay;
Some wind of grief or doubt will rise
And turn my rosy sky to gray.
I shall awake, in rainy morn,
To find my heart left lone and drear;
Thus, half in sadness, half in scorn,
I let my life burn on as clear
Though friends grow cold or fond love woos;
But Heaven, O Lord, I cannot lose!

In golden hours, the angel Peace
Comes down and broods me with her wings:
I gain from sorrow sweet release;
I mate me with divinest things;
When shapes of guilt and gloom arise
And far the radiant angel flees, —
My song is lost in mournful sighs,
My wine of triumph left but lees,
In vain for me her pinions shine,
And pure, celestial days begin:
Earth's passion-flowers I still must twine,
Nor braid one beauteous lily in.
Ah! is it good or ill I choose?
But Heaven, O Lord, I cannot lose!

So wait I. Every day that dies
With flush and fragrance born of June,
I know shall more resplendent rise
Where summer needs nor sun nor moon,
And every bud on love's low tree,
Whose mocking crimson flames and falls,
In fullest flower I yet shall see
High blooming by the jasper walls.
Nay, every sin that dims my days,
And wild regrets that veil the sun,
Shall fade before those dazzling rays,
And my long glory be begun!
Let the years come to bless or bruise;
Thy heaven, O Lord, I shall not lose!

CONTOOCOOK RIVER.

Of all the streams that seek the sea
By mountain pass, or sunny lea,
Now where is one that dares to vie
With clear Contoocook, swift and shy?
Monadnock's child, of snow-drifts born,
The snows of many a winter morn,
And many a midnight dark and still,
Heaped higher, whiter, day by day,
To melt, at last, with suns of May,
And steal in tiny fall and rill,
Down the long slopes of granite gray:
Or, filter slow through seam and cleft,
When frost and storm the rock have reft,
To bubble cool in sheltered springs
Where the lone red-bird dips his wings,
And the tired fox that gains its brink
Stoops, safe from hound and horn, to drink.
And rills and springs, grown broad and deep,
Unite through gorge and glen to sweep
In roaring brooks that turn and take
The over-floods of pool and lake,
Till, to the fields, the hills deliver
Contoocook's bright and brimming river!

O have you seen, from Hillsboro' town
How fast its tide goes hurrying down,
With rapids now, and now a leap
Past giant boulders, black and steep,
Plunged in mid water, fain to keep
Its current from the meadows green?
But, flecked with foam, it speeds along;
And not the birch trees' silvery sheen,
Nor the soft lull of whispering pines,
Nor hermit thrushes, fluting low,
Nor ferns, nor cardinal flowers that glow
Where clematis, the fairy, twines,
Can stay its course, or still its song;
Ceaseless it flows till, round its bed,
The vales of Henniker are spread,
Their banks all set with golden grain,
Or stately trees whose vistas gleam —
A double forest in the stream;

And, winding 'neath the pine-crowned hill
That overhangs the village plain,
By sunny reaches, broad and still,
It nears the bridge that spans its tide —
The bridge whose arches low and wide
It ripples through — and should you lean
A moment there, no lovelier scene
On England's Wye, or Scotland's Tay,
Would charm your gaze a summer's day.

And on it glides, by grove and glen,
Dark woodlands and the homes of men,
With now a ferry, now a mill:
Till, deep and calm, its waters fill
The channels round that gem of isles
Sacred to captives' woes and wiles,
And, gleeful half, half eddying back.
Blend with the lordly Merrimac:
And Merrimac whose tide is strong
Rolls gently, with its waves along,
Monadnock's stream that, coy and fair,
Has come, its larger life to share,
And, to the sea, doth safe deliver
Contoocook's bright and brimming river!

DAILY DYING.

Not in a moment drops the rose
That in a summer garden grows:
A robin sings beneath the tree
A twilight song of ecstasy,
And the red, red leaves at its fragrant heart,
Trembling so in delicious pain,
Fall to the ground with a sudden start,
And the grass is gay with a crimson stain;
And a honey-bee, out of the fields of clover,
Heavily flying the garden over,
Brushes the stem as it passes by,
And others fall where the heart-leaves lie,
And air and dew, ere the night is done,
Have stolen the petals, every one.

And sunset's gleam of gorgeous dyes
Ne'er with one shadow fades away,
But slowly o'er those radiant skies
There steals the evening cold and gray,
And amber and violet linger still
When stars are over the eastern hill.

The maple does not shed its leaves
In one tempestuous scarlet rain,
But softly, when the south wind grieves,
Slow-wandering over wood and plain,
One by one they waver through
The Indian Summer's hazy blue,
And drop, at last, on the forest mould,
Coral and ruby and burning gold.

Our death is gradual, like to these:
We die with every waning day;
There is no waft of sorrow's breeze
But bears some heart-leaf slow away!
Up and on to the vast To Be
Our life is going eternally!
Less of earth than we had last year
Throbs in your veins and throbs in mine,
But the way to heaven is growing clear,
While the gates of the city fairer shine,
And the day that our latest treasures flee,
Wide they will open for you and me!

HEROES.

The winds that once the Argo bore
Have died by Neptune's ruined shrines,
And her hull is the drift of the deep sea-floor,
Though shaped of Pelion's tallest pines.
You may seek her crew on every isle
Fair in the foam of Ægean seas,
But, out of their rest, no charm can wile
Jason and Orpheus and Hercules.

And Priam's wail is heard no more
By windy Ilion's sea-built walls;
Nor great Achilles, stained with gore,
Shouts, "O ye Gods! 't is Hector falls!"
On Ida's mount is the shining snow,
But Jove has gone from its brow away;
And red on the plain the poppies grow
Where the Greek and the Trojan fought that day.

Mother Earth! Are the heroes dead?
Do they thrill the soul of the years no more?
Are the gleaming snows and the poppies red
All that is left of the brave of yore?
Are there none to fight as Theseus fought?
Far in the young world's misty dawn?
Or to teach as the gray-haired Nestor taught?
Mother Earth! are the heroes gone?

Gone? In a grander form they rise;
Dead? We may clasp their hands in ours;
And catch the light of their clearer eyes,
And wreathe their brows with immortal flowers.
Wherever a noble deed is done
'T is the pulse of a hero's heart is stirred;
Wherever Right has a triumph won
There are the heroes' voices heard.

Their armor rings on a fairer field
Than the Greek and the Trojan fiercely trod;
For Freedom's sword is the blade they wield,
And the light above is the smile of God.

So, in his isle of calm delight,
Jason may sleep the years away;
For the heroes live and the sky is bright,
And the world is a braver world to-day.

TO MOSCOW.

ACROSS the steppe we journeyed,
The brown, fir-darkened plain
That rolls to east and rolls to west,
Broad as the billowy main,
When lo! a sudden splendor
Came shimmering through the air,
As if the clouds should melt and leave
The heights of heaven bare,—
A maze of rainbow domes and spires
Full glorious on the sky,
With wafted chimes from many a tower
As the south-wind went by,
And a thousand crosses lightly hung
That shone like morning stars,—
'Twas the Kremlin wall! 'Twas Moscow,—
The jewel of the Czars!

SUNSET IN MOSCOW.

O THE splendor of the city,
When the sun is in the west!
Ruddy gold on spire and belfry,
Gold on Moskwa's placid breast;
Till the twilight soft and sombre
Falls on wall and street and square,
And the domes and towers in shadow
Stand like silent monks at prayer.

'Tis the hour for dream and legend:
Meet me by the Sacred Gate!
We will watch the crowd go by us;
We will stories old relate;
Till the bugle of the barracks
Calls the soldier to repose,
And from off the steppe to northward
Chill the wind of midnight blows.

FRANCIS QUARLES.

THE WORLD.

SHE's empty: hark! she sounds: there's nothing there
But noise to fill thy ear;
Thy vain inquiry can at length but find
A blast of murmuring wind:
It is a cask that seems as full as fair,
But merely tunned with air.
Fond youth, go build thy hopes on better grounds;
The soul that vainly founds
Her joys upon this world, but feeds on empty sounds.

She's empty: hark! she sounds; there's nothing in't:
The spark-engendering flint
Shall sooner melt, and hardest raunce shall first
Dissolve and quench thy thirst,
Ere this false world shall still thy stormy breast
With smooth-faced calms of rest.
Thou mayst as well expect meridian light
From shades of black-mouthed night,
As in this empty world to find a full delight.

She's empty: hark! she sounds: 'tis void and vast;
What if some flattering blast
Of fatuous honor should perchance be there,
And whisper in thine ear?
It is but wind, and blows but where it list,
And vanisheth like mist.
Poor honor earth can give! What generous mind
Would be so base to bind
Her heaven-bred soul, a slave to serve a blast of wind?

She's empty; hark! she sounds: 'tis but a ball
For fools to play withal;
The painted film but of a stronger bubble,
That's lined with silken trouble.
It is a world whose work and recreation
Is vanity and vexation;
A hag, repaired with vice-complexioned paint,
A quest-house of complaint.
It is a saint, a fiend; worse fiend when most a saint.

She's empty: hark! she sounds: 'tis vain and void.
What's here to be enjoyed
But grief and sickness, and large bills of sorrow,
Drawn now and crossed to-morrow?
Or, what are men but puffs of dying breath,
Revived with living death?
Fond youth, O build thy hopes on surer grounds
Than what dull flesh propounds:
Trust not this hollow world; she's empty: hark! she sounds.

ON MAN.

At our creation, but the Word was said;
And we were made;
No sooner were, but our false hearts did swell
With pride, and fell:
How slight is man! At what an easy cost
He's made and lost!

GRIEF FOR THE LOSS OF THE DEAD.

I must lament, Nature commands it so:
The more I strive with tears, the more they flow;
These eyes have just, nay, double cause of moan;
They weep the common loss, they weep their own.
He sleeps indeed; then give me leave to weep
Tears, fully answerable to his sleep.

ON SIN.

How, how am I deceived! I thought my bed
Had entertained a fair, a beauteous bride:
Oh, how were my believing thoughts misled
To a false beauty lying by my side!
Sweet were her kisses, full of choice delight;
My fancy found no difference in the night:
I thought they were true joys that thus had led
My darkened soul, but they were false alarms;
I thought I'd had fair Rachel in my bed,
But I had blear-eyed Leah in my arms;
How seeming sweet is sin when clothed in light,
But, when discovered, what a loathed delight.

ON THE LIFE OF MAN.

Our life is nothing but a winter's day;
Some only break their fasts, and so, away:
Others stay dinner, and depart full fed;
The deepest age but sups and goes to bed:
He's most in debt that lingers out the day;
Who dies betimes, has less; and less to pay.

ON DOVES AND SERPENTS.

We must have doves and serpents in our heart;
But how they must be marshalled, there's the art.
They must agree, and not be far asunder;
The dove must hold the wily serpent under;
Their natures teach what places they must keep,
The dove can fly; the serpent only creep.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

THE LIE.

Go, soul, the body's guest,
Upon a thankless errand;
Fear not to touch the best;
The truth shall be thy warrant.
Go, since I needs must die,
And give them all the lie.

Go, tell the court it glows,
And shines like painted wood;
Go, tell the church it shows
What's good, but does no good.
If court and church reply.
Give court and church the lie.

Tell potentates, they live
Acting, but oh! their actions
Not loved, unless they give;
Not strong, but by their factions.
If potentates reply,
Give potentates the lie.

Tell men of high condition,
That rule affairs of state,
Their purpose is ambition;
Their practice only hate.
And if they do reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell those that brave it most,
They beg for more by spending,
Who, in their greatest cost,
Seek nothing but commending.
And if they make reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

Tell zeal it lacks devotion;
Tell love it is but lust;
Tell time it is but motion;
Tell flesh it is but dust:
And wish them not reply,
For thou must give the lie.

Tell age it daily wasteth;
Tell honor how it alters;
Tell beauty that it blasteth;
Tell favor that she falters;
And as they do reply,
Give every one the lie.

Tell wit how much it wrangles
In fickle points of niceness;
Tell wisdom she entangles
Herself in over-wiseness:
And if they do reply,
Then give them both the lie.

Tell physic of her boldness;
Tell skill it is pretension;
Tell charity of coldness;
Tell law it is contention:
And if they yield reply,
Then give them still the lie,

Tell fortune of her blindness;
Tell nature of decay;
Tell friendship of unkindness;
Tell justice of delay:
And if they do reply,
Then give them all the lie.

Tell arts they have not soundness,
But vary by esteeming:
Tell schools they lack profoundness,
And stand too much on seeming.
If arts and schools reply,
Give arts and schools the lie.

Tell faith it's fled the city;
Tell how the country erreth;
Tell manhood shakes off pity;
Tell virtue, least preferreth.
And if they do reply,
Spare not to give the lie.

So, when thou hast, as I
Commanded thee, done blabbing,
Although to give the lie,
Deserves no less than stabbing;
Yet stab at thee who will,
No stab the soul can kill.

THE SILENT LOVER.

PASSIONS are likened best to floods and streams,
The shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb;

So, when affection yields discourse, it seems
The bottom is but shallow whence they come;
They that are rich in words, must needs discover
They are but poor in that which makes a lover.

Wrong not, sweet mistress of my heart,
The merit of true passion;
With thinking that he feels no smart
That sues for no compassion,

Since, if my plaints were not to approve
The conquest of thy beauty,
It comes not from defect of love,
But fear to exceed my duty.

For knowing not I sue to serve
A saint of such perfection
As all desire, but none deserve
A place in her affection,

I rather choose to want relief
Than venture the revealing;
Where glory recommends the grief,
Despair disdains the healing.

Silence in love betrays more woe
Than words, though ne'er so witty:
A beggar that is dumb, you know,
May challenge double pity.

Then wrong not, dearest to my heart,
My love for secret passion;
He smarteth most who hides his smart
And sues for no compassion.

THOMAS BUCHANAN READ.

SHERIDAN'S RIDE.

UP from the south at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door,
The terrible grumble and rumble and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon's bar;
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
With Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good, broad highway, leading down;
And there, through the flash of the morning light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night
Was seen to pass as with eagle flight.
As if he knew the terrible need,
He stretched away with the utmost speed;
Hills rose and fell, — but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprung from those swift hoofs, thundering south
The dust, like smoke from the cannon's mouth;
Or the trail of a comet, sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster.
The heart of the steed and the heart of the master
Were beating, like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battle-field calls;
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet, the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed,
And the landscape sped away behind,
Like an ocean flying before the wind;
And the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire,
Swept on, with his wild eyes full of fire;
But, lo! he is nearing his heart's desire,
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away:

The first that the General saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops;
What was done, — what to do, — a glance told him both,
And, striking his spurs with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the line mid a storm of huzzas,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there, because
The sight of the master compelled it to pause.
With foam and with dust the black charger was gray;
By the flash of his eye, and his nostrils' play,
He seemed to the whole great army to say,
"I have brought you Sheridan all the way
From Winchester down, to save the day!"

Hurrah, hurrah for Sheridan!
Hurrah, hurrah for horse and man!
And when their statues are placed on high,
Under the dome of the Union sky. —
The American soldier's Temple of Fame,—
There with the glorious General's name
Be it said in letters both bold and bright:
"Here is the steed that saved the day
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
From Winchester, — twenty miles away!"

THE CLOSING SCENE.

Within the sober realm of leafless trees,
The russet year inhaled the dreamy air;
Like some tanned reaper, in his hour of ease,
When all the fields are lying brown and bare.

The gray barns looking from their hazy hills,
O'er the dun waters widening in the vales,
Sent down the air a greeting to the mills
On the dull thunder of alternate flails.

All sights were mellowed and all sounds subdued,
The hills seemed further and the stream sang low,
As in a dream the distant woodman hewed
His winter log with many a muffled blow.

The embattled forests, erewhile armed with gold,
Their banners bright with every martial hue,
Now stood like some sad, beaten host of old,
Withdrawn afar in Time's remotest blue.

On slumb'rous wings the vulture held his flight;
The dove scarce heard its sighing mate's complaint;
And, like a star slow drowning in the light,
The village church-vane seemed to pale and faint.

The sentinel-cock upon the hillside crew, —
Crew thrice, — and all was stiller than before;
Silent, till some replying warden blew
His alien horn, and then was heard no more.

Where erst the jay, within the elm's tall crest,
Made garrulous trouble round her unfledged young;
And where the oriole hung her swaying nest,
By every light wind like a censer swung;—

Where sang the noisy martens of the eaves,
The busy swallows circling ever near,—
Foreboding, as the rustic mind believes,
An early harvest and a plenteous year;—

Where every bird which charmed the vernal feast
Shook the sweet slumber from its wings at morn,
To warn the reaper of the rosy east:—
All now was sunless, empty, and forlorn.

Alone from out the stubble piped the quail,
And croaked the crow through all the dreamy gloom;
Alone the pheasant, drumming in the vale,
Made echo to the distant cottage loom.

There was no bud, no bloom upon the bowers;
The spiders moved their thin shrouds night by night,
The thistle-down, the only ghost of flowers,
Sailed slowly by,—passed noiseless out of sight.

Amid all this—in this most cheerless air,
And where the woodbine shed upon the porch
Its crimson leaves, as if the year stood there
Firing the floor with his inverted torch,—

Amid all this, the centre of the scene,
The white-haired matron with monotonous tread
Plied the swift wheel, and with her joyless mien
Sat, like a fate, and watched the flying thread.

She had known Sorrow,—he had walked with her,
Oft supped, and broke the bitter ashen crust;
And in the dead leaves still she heard the stir
Of his black mantle trailing in the dust.

While yet her cheek was bright with summer bloom,
Her country summoned and she gave her all;
And twice War bowed to her his sable plume,—
Re-gave the swords to rust upon the wall.

Re-gave the swords, but not the hand that drew
And struck for Liberty the dying blow;
Nor him who, to his sire and country true,
Fell mid the ranks of the invading foe.

Long, but not loud, the droning wheel went on,
Like the low murmur of a hive at noon;
Long, but not loud, the memory of the gone
Breathed through her lips a sad and tremulous tune.

At last the thread was snapped; her head was bowed;
Life dropt the distaff through his hands serene:
And loving neighbors smoothed her careful shroud,
While Death and Winter closed the autumn scene.

THE BRAVE AT HOME.

The maid who binds her warrior's sash
With smile that well her pain dissembles,
The while beneath her drooping lash
One starry tear-drop hangs and trembles,
Though Heaven alone records the tear,
And Fame shall never know her story,
Her heart has shed a drop as dear
As e'er bedewed the field of glory!

The wife who girds her husband's sword,
Mid little ones who weep or wonder,
And bravely speaks the cheering word,
What though her heart be rent asunder,
Doomed nightly in her dreams to hear
The bolts of death around him rattle,
Hath shed as sacred blood as e'er
Was poured upon the field of battle!

The mother who conceals her grief
While to her breast her son she presses,
Then breathes a few brave words and brief,
Kissing the patriot brow she blesses,
With no one but her secret God
To know the pain that weighs upon her,
Sheds holy blood as e'er the sod
Received on Freedom's field of honor!

DRIFTING.

My soul to-day
Is far away,
Sailing the Vesuvian Bay;
My wingèd boat,
A bird afloat,
Swims round the purple peaks remote:—

Round purple peaks
It sails, and seeks
Blue inlets and their crystal creeks,
Where high rocks throw,
Through deeps below,
A duplicated golden glow.

Far, vague, and dim
The mountains swim;
While, on Vesuvius' misty brim,
With outstretched hands,
The gray smoke stands
O'erlooking the volcanic lands.

Here Ischia smiles
O'er liquid miles;
And yonder, bluest of the isles,
Calm Capri waits,
Her sapphire gates
Beguiling to her bright estates.

I heed not, if
My rippling skiff
Float swift or slow from cliff to cliff;—
With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Under the walls of Paradise.

Under the walls
Where swells and falls
The bay's deep breast at intervals,
At peace I lie,
Blown softly by,
A cloud upon this liquid sky.

The day, so mild,
Is Heaven's own child,
With Earth and Ocean reconciled;—
The airs I feel
Around me steal
Are murmuring to the murmuring keel.

Over the rail
My hand I trail
Within the shadow of the sail;
A joy intense,
The cooling sense
Glides down my drowsy indolence.

With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Where Summer sings and never dies,—
O'erveiled with vines,
She glows and shines
Among her future oil and wines.

Her children, hid
The cliffs amid,
Are gambolling with the gambolling kid;
Or down the walls,
With tipsy calls,
Laugh on the rocks like waterfalls.

The fisher's child,
With tresses wild,
Unto the smooth, bright sand beguiled,
With glowing lips
Sings as she skips,
Or gazes at the far-off ships.

Yon deep bark goes
Where traffic blows,
From lands of sun to lands of snows;—
This happier one,
Its course is run
From lands of snow to lands of sun.

O happy ship,
To rise and dip,
With the blue crystal at your lip!
O happy crew,
My heart with you
Sails, and sails, and sings anew!

No more, no more
The worldly shore
Upbraids me with its loud uproar!
With dreamful eyes
My spirit lies
Under the walls of Paradise!

In lofty lines,
Mid palms and pines,
And olives, aloes, elms, and vines,
Sorrento swings
On sunset wings,
Where Tasso's spirit soars and sings.

RICHARD REALF.

MY SLAIN.

This sweet child that hath climbed upon my knee,
This amber-haired, four-summered little maid,
With her unconscious beauty troubleth me,
With her low prattle maketh me afraid.
Ah, darling! when you cling and nestle so
You hurt me, though you do not see me cry,
Nor hear the weariness with which I sigh
For the dear babe I killed so long ago.
I tremble at the touch of your caress:
I am not worthy of your innocent faith;
I, who with whetted knives of worldliness,
Did put my own child-heartedness to death;
Beside whose grave I pace forevermore,
Like desolation on a shipwrecked shore.

There is no little child within me now,
To sing back to the thrushes, to leap up
When June winds kiss me, when an apple-bough
Laughs into blossoms, or a buttercup
Plays with the sunshine, or a violet
Dances in the glad dew. Alas! alas!
The meaning of the daisies in the grass
I have forgotten; and if my cheeks are wet,
It is not with the blitheness of the child,
But with the bitter sorrow of sad years.
O moaning life! with life irreconciled;

O backward-looking thought! O pain! O tears!
For us there is not any silver sound
Of rhythmic wonders springing from the ground.

Woe worth the knowledge and the bookish lore
Which makes men mummies; weighs out every grain
Of that which was miraculous before,
And sneers the heart down with the scoffing brain;
Woe worth the peering, analytic days
That dry the tender juices in the breast,
And put the thunders of the Lord to test,
So that no marvel must be, and no praise,
Nor any God except Necessity.
What can ye give my poor stained life in lieu
Of this dead cherub which I slew for ye!
Take back your doubtful wisdom and renew
My early foolish freshness of the dunce,
Whose simple instincts guessed the heavens at once.

* * *

CHARLES F. RICHARDSON.

AMENDS.

THINK not your duty done when, sad and tearful,
Your heart recounts its sins,
And praying God for pardon, weak and fearful,
Its better life begins,

Nor rest content when, braver grown and stronger,
Your days are sweet and pure,
Because you follow evil ways no longer,
In Christ's defence secure.

Bethink you then, but not with fruitless ruing,
—That bids the past be still,
But what your life has wrought to men's undoing,
By influence for ill.

Go forth, and dare not rest until the morrow,
But, lest it be too late,
Seek out the hearts whose weight of sin and sorrow
Through you has grown more great.

Take gifts to all of love and reparation,
Or if it may not be,
Pray Christ, with ceaseless lips, to send salvation
Till each chained soul be free.

WORSHIP.

BRAVE spirit, that will brook no intervention,
But thus alone before thy God dost stand,
Content if he but see thy heart's intention,—
Why spurn the suppliant knee and outstretched hand?

Sweet soul, that kneelest in the solemn glory
Of yon cathedral altar, while the prayer
Of priest or bishop tells thine own heart's story,—
Why think that they alone heaven's keys may bear?

Man worships with the heart; for wheresoever
One burning pulse of heartfelt homage stirs,
There God shall straightway find his own, and never
In church or desert, miss his worshippers.

PATIENCE.

IF, when you labor all the day,
You see its minutes slip away
With joy unfound, with work undone,
And hope descending with the sun,

Then cheerily lie down to rest:
The longest work shall be the best;
And when the morrow greets your eyes,
With strong and patient heart arise.

For Patience, stern and leaden-eyed,
Looks far where future joys abide;
Nor sees short sadness at her feet,
For sight of triumph long and sweet.

IMITATION.

WHERE shall we find a perfect life, whereby
To shape our lives for all eternity?

This man is great and wise; the world reveres him,
  Reveres, but cannot love his heart of stone;
And so it dares not follow, though it fears him,
  But bids him walk his mountain path alone.

That man is good and gentle; all men love him,
  Yet dare not ask his feeble arm for aid;
The world's best work is ever far above him,
  He shrinks beneath the storm-capped mountain shade.

O loveless strength! O strengthless love! the Master
  Whose life shall shape our lives is not as thou:
Sweet Friend in peace, strong Saviour in disaster,
  Our heart of hearts enfolds thine image now!

Be Christ's the fair and perfect life whereby
We shape our lives for all eternity.

JUSTICE.

A HUNDRED noble wishes fill my heart,
  I long to help each soul in need of aid;
In all good works my zeal would have its part,
  Before no weight of toil it stands afraid.

But noble wishes are not noble deeds,
  And he does least who seeks to do the whole;
Who works the best, his simplest duties heeds,
  Who moves the world, first moves a single soul.

Then go, my heart, thy plainest work begin,
  Do first not what thou canst, but what thou must;
Build not upon a corner-stone of sin,
  Nor seek great works until thou first be just.

SARAH ROBERTS.

THE VOICE OF THE GRASS.

HERE I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
  By the dusty roadside,
  On the sunny hill-side,
  Close by the noisy brook,
  In every shady brook,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, smiling everywhere;
  All around the open door,

Where sit the aged poor;
Here where the children play,
In the bright and merry May,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
In the noisy city street,
My pleasant face you'll meet,
Cheering the sick at heart
Toiling his busy part —
Silently creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
You cannot see me coming,
Nor hear my low sweet humming;
For in the starry night,
And the glad morning light,
I come quietly creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
More welcome than the flowers
In summer's pleasant hours;
The gentle cow is glad,
And the merry bird not sad,
To see me creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
When you're numbered with the dead
In your still and narrow bed,
In the happy spring I'll come
And deck your silent home —
Creeping, silently creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
My humble song of praise
Most joyfully I raise
To Him at whose command
I beautify the land,
Creeping, silently creeping everywhere.

SAMUEL ROGERS.

Six Poems entitled by the author, "Reflections."

THE PERVERSION OF GREAT GIFTS.

ALAS, to our discomfort and his own,
Oft are the greatest talents to be found
In a fool's keeping. For what else is he,
However worldly wise and worldly strong,
Who can pervert and to the worst abuse
The noblest means to serve the noblest ends?
Who can employ the gift of eloquence,
That sacred gift, to dazzle and delude;
Or, if achievement in the field be his,
Climb but to gain a loss, suffering how much,
And how much more inflicting! Every where,
Cost what they will, such cruel freaks are played;
And hence the turmoil in this world of ours,
The turmoil never ending, still beginning,
The wailing and the tears.— When Cæsar came,
He who could master all men but himself,
Who did so much and could so well record it;
Even he, the most applauded in his part,
Who, when he spoke, all things summed up in him,
Spoke to convince, nor ever, when he fought,
Fought but to conquer,— what a life was his,
Slaying so many, to be slain at last;
A life of trouble and incessant toil,
And all to gain what is far better missed!

HEART SUPERIOR TO HEAD.

The heart, they say, is wiser than the schools:
And well they may. All that is great in thought,
That strikes at once as with electric fire,
And lifts us, as it were, from earth to heaven,
Comes from the heart; and who confesses not
Its voice as sacred, nay, almost divine,
When inly it declares on what we do,
Blaming, approving? Let an erring world
Judge as it will, we care not while we stand
Acquitted there; and oft, when clouds on clouds
Compass us round and not a track appears,
Oft is an upright heart the surest guide,
Surer and better than the subtlest head;
Still with its silent counsels through the dark
Onward and onward leading.

ON A CHILD.

This child, so lovely and so cherub-like,
No fairer spirit in the heaven of heavens)
Say, must he know remorse? Must passion come,
Passion in all or any of its shapes,
To cloud and sully what is now so pure?
Yes, come it must. For who, alas! has lived,
Nor in the watches of the night recalled
Words he has wished unsaid and deeds undone?
Yes, come it must. But if, as we may hope,
He learns ere long to discipline his mind,
And onward goes, humbly and cheerfully,
Assisting them that faint, weak though he be,
And in his trying hours trusting in God,—
Fair as he is, he shall be fairer still;
For what was innocence will then be virtue.

MAN'S RESTLESSNESS.

Man to the last is but a froward child;
So eager for the future, come what may,
And to the present so insensible!
Oh, if he could in all things as he would,
Years would as days, and hours as moments, be;
He would, so restless is his spirit here,
Give wings to time, and wish his life away!

THE SELFISH.

Oh, if the selfish knew how much they lost,
What would they not endeavor, not endure,
To imitate, as far as in them lay,
Him who his wisdom and his power employs
In making others happy!

EXHORTATION TO MARRIAGE.

Hence to the altar and with her thou lov'st,
With her who longs to strew thy way with flowers;
Nor lose the blessed privilege to give
Birth to a race immortal as yourselves,
Which trained by you, shall make a heaven on earth,
And tread the path that leads from earth to heaven.

[*From Human Life.*]

THE PASSAGE FROM BIRTH TO AGE.

And such is Human Life; so, gliding on,
It glimmers like a meteor, and is gone!
Yet is the tale, brief though it be, as strange,
As full, methinks, of wild and wondrous change,
As any that the wandering tribes require,
Stretched in the desert round their evening fire;
As any sung of old in hall or bower
To minstrel-harps at midnight's witching hour!
Born in a trance, we wake, observe, inquire;
And the green earth, the azure sky admire
Of elfin-size,—for ever as we run,
We cast a longer shadow in the sun!
And now a charm, and now a grace is won!
We grow in stature, and in wisdom too!
And, as new scenes, new objects rise to view,
Think nothing done while aught remains to do.
Yet, all forgot, how oft the eyelids close,
And from the slack hand drops the gathered rose!
How oft, as dead, on the warm turf we lie,
While many an emmet comes with curious eye;
And on her nest the watchful wren sits by!
Nor do we speak or move, or hear or see;
So like what once we were, and once again shall be!
And say, how soon, where, blithe as innocent,
The boy at sunrise carolled as he went,
An aged pilgrim on his staff shall lean,
Tracing in vain the footsteps o'er the green;
The man himself how altered, not the scene!
Now journeying home with nothing but the name;
Wayworn and spent, another and the same!
No eye observes the growth or the decay.
To-day we look as we did yesterday;
And we shall look to-morrow as to-day.

[*From Human Life.*]

TRUE UNION.

Then before all they stand,—the holy vow
And ring of gold, no fond illusions now,
Bind her as his. Across the threshold led,
And every tear kissed off as soon as shed,
His house she enters,—there to be a light
Shining within, when all without is night;
A guardian-angel o'er his life presiding,
Doubling his pleasures, and his cares dividing;
Winning him back, when mingling in the throng,
From a vain world we love, alas, too long,
To fireside happiness, and hours of ease
Blest with that charm, the certainty to please.
How oft her eyes read his; her gentle mind
To all his wishes, all his thoughts inclined;
Still subject,—ever on the watch to borrow
Mirth of his mirth, and sorrow of his sorrow.
The soul of music slumbers in the shell,
Till waked and kindled by the master's spell;

And feeling hearts,—touch them but rightly,—pour
A thousand melodies unheard before!

[*From Human Life.*]

AGE.

Age has now
Stamped with its signet that ingenuous brow;
And, 'mid his old hereditary trees,
Trees he has climbed so oft, he sits and sees
His children's children playing round his knees:
Then happiest, youngest, when the quoit is flung,
When side by side the archers' bows are strung;
His to prescribe the place, adjudge the prize,
Envying no more the young their energies
Than they an old man when his words are wise;
His a delight how pure . . . without alloy;
Strong in their strength, rejoicing in their joy!
Now in their turn assisting, they repay
The anxious cares of many and many a day;
And now by those he loves relieved, restored,
His very wants and weaknesses afford
A feeling of enjoyment. In his walks,
Leaning on them, how oft he stops and talks,
While they look up! Their questions, their replies,
Fresh as the welling waters, round him rise,
Gladdening his spirit; and, his theme the past,
How eloquent he is! His thoughts flow fast;
And, while his heart (oh, can the heart grow old?
False are the tales that in the world are told!)
Swells in his voice, he knows not where to end;
Like one discoursing of an absent friend.
But there are moments which he calls his own.
Then, never less alone than when alone,
Those whom he loved so long and sees no more,
Loved and still loves,—not dead,—but gone before,
He gathers round him; and revives at will
Scenes in his life,—that breathe enchantment still,—
That come not now at dreary intervals,—
But where a light as from the blessed falls,
A light such guests bring ever,—pure and holy,—
Lapping the soul in sweetest melancholy!
—Ah, then less willing (nor the choice condemn)
To live with others than to think of them!

[*From The Pleasures of Memory.*]

MEMORY.

Thou first, best friend that heaven assigns below
To soothe and sweeten all the cares we know;
Whose glad suggestions still each vain alarm,
When nature fades and life forgets to charm;
Thee would the Muse invoke!—to thee belong
The sage's precept and the poet's song.
What softened views thy magic glass reveals,
When o'er the landscape time's meek twilight steals!
As when in ocean sinks the orb of day,
Long on the wave reflected lustres play;
Thy tempered gleams of happiness resigned
Glance on the darkened mirror of the mind.

. . . . .

Hail, memory, hail! in thy exhaustless mine
From age to age unnumbered treasures shine!
Thought and her shadowy brood thy call obey,
And place and time are subject to thy sway!
Thy pleasures most we feel, when most alone;
The only pleasures we can call our own.
Lighter than air, hope's summer visions die,
If but a fleeting cloud obscure the sky;
If but a beam of sober reason play,
Lo, fancy's fairy frost-work melts away!
But can the wiles of art, the grasp of power
Snatch the rich relics of a well-spent hour?
These, when the trembling spirit wings her flight,
Pour round her path a stream of living light;
And gild those pure and perfect realms of rest,
Where virtue triumphs, and her sons are blest!

[*From The Pleasures of Memory.*]

THE OLD SCHOOL-HOUSE.

THE school's lone porch, with reverend mosses gray,
Just tells the pensive pilgrim where it lay.
Mute is the bell that rung at peep of dawn,
Quickening my truant feet across the lawn;
Unheard the shout that rent the noon-tide air,
When the slow dial gave a pause to care.
Up springs, at every step, to claim a tear,
Some little friendship formed and cherished here;
And not the lightest leaf, but trembling teems
With golden visions and romantic dreams!

[*From The Pleasures of Memory.*]

GUARDIAN SPIRITS.

OFT may the spirits of the dead descend
To watch the silent slumbers of a friend;
To hover round his evening walk unseen,
And hold sweet converse on the dusky green;
To hail the spot where first their friendship grew,
And heaven and nature opened to their view!
Oft, when he trims his cheerful hearth, and sees
A smiling circle emulous to please;
There may these gentle guests delight to dwell,
And bless the scene they loved in life so well!

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI.

UP-HILL.

DOES the road wind up-hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labor you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yea, beds for all who come.

REMEMBER.

REMEMBER me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go, yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you planned;
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

THE FIRST SPRING DAY.

I WONDER if the sap is stirring yet.
If wintry birds are dreaming of a mate,
If frozen snowdrops feel as yet the sun
And crocus fires are kindling one by one;
Sing, robin, sing;
I still am sore in doubt concerning spring.

I wonder if the springtide of this year
Will bring another spring both lost and dear;
If heart and spirit will find out their spring,
Or if the world alone will bud and sing:
Sing, hope, to me;
Sweet notes, my hope, soft notes for memory.

The sap will surely quicken soon or late,
The tardiest bird will twitter to a mate;
So spring must dawn again with warmth and bloom,
Or in this world, or in the world to come:
Sing, voice of spring,
Till I too blossom, and rejoice and sing.

SONG.

WHEN I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet;
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on, as if in pain:
And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

SOUND SLEEP.

SOME are laughing, some are weeping;
She is sleeping, only sleeping.
Round her rest wild flowers are creeping;

There the wind is heaping, heaping,
Sweetest sweets of summer's keeping,
By the cornfields ripe for reaping.

There are lilies, and there blushes
The deep rose, and there the thrushes
Sing till latest sunlight flushes
In the west; a fresh wind brushes
Through the leaves while evening hushes.

There by day the lark is singing
And the grass and weeds are springing;
There by night the bat is winging;
There for ever winds are bringing
Far-off chimes of church-bells ringing.

Night and morning, noon and even,
Their sound fills her dreams with Heaven:
The long strife at length is striven:
Till her grave-bands shall be riven,
Such is the good portion given
To her soul at rest and shriven.

WIFE TO HUSBAND.

Pardon the faults in me,
For the love of years ago:
Good-bye.
I must drift across the sea,
I must sink into the snow,
I must die.

You can bask in this sun,
You can drink wine, and eat:
Good-bye.
I must gird myself and run,
Though with unready feet:
I must die.

Blank sea to sail upon,
Cold bed to sleep in:
Good-bye.
While you clasp I must be gone
For all your weeping:
I must die.

A kiss for one friend,
And a word for two, —
Good-bye: —
A lock that you must send,
A kindness you must do:
I must die.

Not a word for you,
Not a lock or kiss,
Good-bye.
We, one, must part in two
Verily death is this:
I must die.

AT HOME.

When I was dead, my spirit turned
To seek the much-frequented house;
I passed the door, and saw my friends
Feasting beneath green orange boughs;
From hand to hand they pushed the wine,
They sucked the pulp of plum and peach;
They sang, they jested, and they laughed,
For each was loved of each.

I listened to their honest chat:
Said one: "To-morrow we shall be
Plod plod along the featureless sands,
And coasting miles and miles of sea."
Said one: "Before the turn of tide
We will achieve the eyrie-seat."
Said one: "To-morrow shall be like
To-day, but much more sweet."

"To-morrow," said they, strong with hope,
And dwelt upon the pleasant way:
"To-morrow," cried they one and all,
While no one spoke of yesterday.
Their life stood full at blessed noon;
I, only I, had passed away:
"To-morrow and to-day" they cried
I was of yesterday.

I shivered comfortless, but cast
No chill across the tablecloth;
I all-forgotten shivered, sad
To stay, and yet to part how loth:
I passed from the familiar room,
I who from love had passed away,
Like the remembrance of a guest
That tarrieth but a day.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

THE SEA-LIMITS.

Consider the sea's listless chime:
Time's self it is, made audible, —
The murmur of the earth's own shell,
Secret continuance sublime
Is the era's end. Our sight may pass
No furlong farther. Since time was,
This sound hath told the lapse of time.

No quiet which is death's, — it hath
The mournfulness of ancient life,
Enduring always at dull strife.
As the world's heart of rest and wrath,
Its painful pulse is on the sands.
Lost utterly, the whole sky stands
Gray and not known along its path.

Listen alone beside the sea,
Listen alone among the woods;
Those voices of twin solitudes
Shall have one sound alike to thee.
Hark where the murmurs of thronged men
Surge and sink back and surge again, —
Still the one voice of wave and tree.

Gather a shell from the strewn beach,
And listen at its lips; they sigh
The same desire and mystery,
The echo of the whole sea's speech,
And all mankind is thus at heart
Not anything but what thou art:
And earth, sea, man, are all in each.

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL.

The blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Herseemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers:
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

. . . . .

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames;

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of heaven she saw
Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
Within the gulf to pierce

Its path; and now she spoke as when
The stars sang in their spheres.

. . . . .

"I wish that he were come to me,
For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in heaven?—on earth,
Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
And shall I feel afraid?"

. . . . .

She gazed and listened, and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,—
"All this is when he comes." She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, filled
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres;
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

LOST DAYS.

The lost days of my life until to-day,
What were they, could I see them on the street
Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of wheat
Sown once for food but trodden into clay?
Or golden coins squandered and still to pay?
Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?
Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
The throats of men in hell, who thirst alway?
I do not see them here; but after death
God knows I know the faces I shall see,
Each one a murdered self, with low last breath:
"I am thyself, what hast thou done to me?"
"And I—and I—thyself"—lo, each one saith—
"And thou thyself to all eternity!"

MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

OUR OWN.

If I had known in the morning
How wearily all the day
The words unkind would trouble my mind
That I said when you went away,
I had been more careful, darling,
Nor given you needless pain;
But we vex our own with look and tone
We may never take back again.

For though in the quiet evening
You may give me the kiss of peace,
Yet it well might be that never for me
The pain of the heart should cease!
How many go forth at morning
Who never come home at night!
And hearts have broken for harsh words spoken,
That sorrow can ne'er set right.

We have careful thought for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometime guest;
But oft for our own the bitter tone,
Though we love our own the best.
Ah! lips with the curve impatient,
Ah! brow with the shade of scorn,
'T were a cruel fate, were the night too late
To undo the work of the morn!

SUFFICIENT UNTO THE DAY.

Because in a day of my days to come
There waiteth a grief to be,
Shall my heart grow faint, and my lips be dumb
In this day that is bright for me?

Because of a subtle sense of pain,
  Like a pulse-beat threaded through
The bliss of my thought, shall I dare
    refrain
  From delight in the pure and true?

In the harvest fields shall I cease to
    glean
  Since the summer bloom has sped?
Shall I veil mine eyes to the noon-
    day sheen
  Since the dew of the morn hath fled?

Nay, phantom ill with the warning
    hand
  Nay, ghosts of the weary past,
Serene, as in armor of faith, I stand,
  You may not hold me fast.

Your shadows across my sun may
    fall,
  But as bright the sun shall shine,
For I walk in a light ye cannot
    pall,
  The light of the King Divine.

And whatever the shades from day to
    day,
  I am sure that His name is Love,
And He never will let me lose my
    way
  To my rest in His home above.

EPES SARGENT.

SOUL OF MY SOUL.

SOUL of my soul, impart
  Thy energy divine!
Inform and fill this languid heart,
  And make Thy purpose mine.
Thy voice is still and small,
  The world's is loud and rude;
Oh, let me hear Thee over all,
  And be, through love, renewed.

Give me the mind to seek
  Thy perfect will to know;
And lead me, tractable and meek,
  The way I ought to go.
Make quick my spirit's ear
  Thy faintest word to hear;
Soul of my soul! be ever near
  To guide me in my need.

A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE.

A LIFE on the ocean wave,
  A home on the rolling deep;
Where the scattered waters rave,
  And the winds their revels keep!
Like an eagle caged, I pine
  On this dull, unchanging shore:
Oh, give me the flashing brine,
  The spray and the tempest's roar!

Once more on the deck I stand,
  Of my own swift-gliding craft:
Set sail! farewell to the land!
  The gale follows fair abaft,
We shoot through the sparkling foam
  Like an ocean-bird set free;—
Like the ocean-bird, our home
  We'll find far out on the sea.

The land is no longer in view,
  The clouds have begun to frown;
But with a stout vessel and crew,
  We'll say, Let the storm come
    down!
And the song of our hearts shall be,
  While the winds and the waters
    rave,
A home on the rolling sea!
  A life on the ocean wave!

FORGET ME NOT.

"FORGET me not?" Ah, words of
    useless warning
  To one whose heart is henceforth
    memory's shrine!
Sooner the skylark might forget the
    morning,
  Than I forget a look, a tone of
    thine.

Sooner the sunflower might forget to waken
When the first radiance lights the eastern hill,
Than I, by daily thoughts of thee forsaken,
Feel, as they kindle, no expanding thrill.

Oft, when at night the deck I'm pacing lonely
Or when I pause to watch some fulgent star,
Will Contemplation be retracing only
Thy form, and fly to greet thee, though afar.

When storms unleashed, with fearful clangor sweeping,
Drive our strained bark along the hollowed sea,
When to the clouds the foam-topped waves are leaping,
Even then I'll not forget, beloved one, thee!

Thy image in my sorrow-shaded hours,
Will, like a sunburst on the waters, shine;
'Twill be as grateful as the breath of flowers
From some green island wafted o'er the brine.

And O sweet lady, when, from home departed,
I count the leagues between us with a sigh,—
When, at the thought, perchance a tear has started,
May I not dream in heart thou'rt sometimes nigh?

Ay, thou wilt, sometimes, when the wine-cup passes,
And friends are gathering round in festal glee,
While bright eyes flash, as flash the brimming glasses,
Let silent Memory pledge one health to me.

Farewell! My fatherland is disappearing
Faster and faster from my baffled sight;
The winds rise wildly, and thick clouds are rearing
Their ebon flags, that hasten on the night,

Farewell! The pilot leaves us; seaward gliding,
Our brave ship dashes through the foamy swell;
But Hope, forever faithful and abiding,
Hears distant welcomes in this last farewell!

A THOUGHT OF THE PAST.

I WAKED from slumber at the dead of night,
Moved by a dream too heavenly fair to last—
A dream of boyhood's season of delight;
It flashed along the dim shapes of the past;
And, as I mused upon its strange appeal,
Thrilling me with emotions undefined,
Old memories, bursting from Time's icy seal,
Rushed, like sun-stricken fountains on my mind.
Scenes where my lot was cast in life's young day;
My favorite haunts, the shores, the ancient woods,
Where, with my schoolmates, I was wont to stray;
Green, sloping lawns, majestic solitudes—
All rose to view, more beautiful than then;—
They faded, and I wept—a child again!

THE SPRING-TIME WILL RETURN.

The birds are mute, the bloom is fled,
Cold, cold, the north winds blow;
And radiant summer lieth dead
Beneath a shroud of snow.
Sweet summer! well may we regret
Thy brief, too brief sojourn;

But, while we grieve, we'll not forget,
The spring-time will return!

Dear friend, the hills rise bare and bleak
That bound thy future years;
Clouds veil the sky, no golden streak,
No rainbow light appears;
Mischance has tracked thy fairest schemes,
To wreck — to whelm — to burn;
But wintry-dark though Fortune seems,
The spring-time will return!

Beloved one! where no sunbeams shine
Thy mortal frame we laid;
But oh, thy spirit's form divine
Waits no sepulchral shade!
No, by those hopes which, plumed with light,
The sod, exulting, spurn,
Love's paradise shall bloom more bright —
The Spring-time will return!

A SUMMER NOON AT SEA.

A holy stillness, beautiful and deep,
Reigns in the air and broods upon the ocean;
The worn-out winds are quieted to sleep,
And not a wave is lifted into motion.

. . . . .

The sea-bird skims along the glassy tide,
With sidelong flight and wing of glittering whiteness,
Or floats upon the sea, outstretching wide
A sheet of gold in the meridian brightness.

Our vessel lies, unstirred by wave or blast,
As she were moored to her dark shadow seeming,
Her pennon twined around the tapering mast,
And her loose sails like marble drapery gleaming.

How, at an hour like this, the unruffled mind
Partakes the quiet that is shed around us!
As if the Power that chained the impatient wind
With the same fetter of repose had bound us!

TROPICAL WEATHER.

Now we're afloat upon the tropic sea:
Here Summer holdeth a perpetual reign.
How flash the waters in their bounding glee!
The sky's soft purple is without a stain.
Full in our wake the smooth, warm trade-winds blowing,
To their unvarying goal still faithful run;
And, as we steer, with sails before them flowing,
Nearer the zenith daily climbs the sun,
The startled flying-fish around us skim,
Glossed like the humming-bird, with rainbow dyes;
And, as they dip into the water's brim,
Swift in pursuit the preying dolphin hies.
All, all is fair; and gazing round, we feel
Over the yielding sense the torrid languor steal.

CUBA.

What sounds arouse me from my slumbers light?
"*Land ho! all hands, ahoy!*" — I'm on the deck:
'Tis early dawn: the day-star yet is bright;

A few white vapory bars the zenith fleck;
And lo! along the horizon, bold and high,
The purple hills of Cuba! Hail, all hail!
Isle of undying verdure, with thy sky
Of purest azure! Welcome, odorous gale!
O scene of life and joy! thou art arrayed
In hues of unimagined loveliness.
Sing louder, brave old mariner! and aid
My swelling heart its rapture to express;
For, from enchanted memory, never more
Shall fade this dawn sublime, this fair, resplendent shore.

MINOT JUDSON SAVAGE.

PESCADERO PEBBLES.

Where slopes the beach to the setting sun,
On the Pescadero shore,
For ever and ever the restless surf
Rolls up with its sullen roar.

And grasping the pebbles in white hands,
And chafing them together,
And grinding them against the cliffs
In stormy and sunny weather,

It gives them never any rest;
All day, all night, the pain
Of their long agony sobs on,
Sinks, and then swells again.

And tourists come from every clime
To search with eager care,
For those whose rest has been the least:
For such have grown most fair.

But yonder, round a point of rock,
In a quiet, sheltered cove,
Where storm ne'er breaks, and sea ne'er comes,
The tourists never rove.

The pebbles lie 'neath the sunny sky
Quiet forevermore;
In dreams of everlasting peace
They sleep upon the shore.

But ugly, and rough, and jagged still,
Are they left by the passing years;
For they miss the beat of angry storms,
And the surf that drips in tears.

The hard turmoil of the pitiless sea
Turns the pebble to beauteous gem,
They who escape the agony
Miss also the diadem.

LIFE IN DEATH.

New being is from being ceased;
No life is but by death;
Something's expiring everywhere
To give some other breath.

There's not a flower that glads the spring
But blooms upon the grave
Of its dead parent seed, in which
Its forms of beauty wave.

The oak, that like an ancient tower
Stands massive on the heath,
Looks out upon a living world.
But strikes its roots in death.

The cattle on a thousand hills
Clip the sweet buds that grow
Rank from the soil enriched by herds
Sleeping long years below.

To-day is but a structure built
Upon dead yesterday;
And Progress hews her temple-stones
From wrecks of old decay.

Then mourn not death; 'tis but a stair
Built with divinest art,
Up which the deathless footsteps climb
Of loved ones who depart.

LIGHT ON THE CLOUD.

THERE's never an always cloudless sky,
There's never a vale so fair,
But over it sometimes shadows lie
In a chill and songless air.

But never a cloud o'erhung the day,
And flung its shadows down,
But on its heaven-side gleamed some ray
Forming a sunshine crown.

It is dark on only the downward side;
Though rage the tempest loud,
And scatter its terrors far and wide,
There's light upon the cloud.

And often, when it traileth low,
Shutting the landscape out,
And only the chilly east-winds blow
From the foggy seas of doubt,

There'll come a time, near the setting sun,
When the joys of life seem few,
A rift will break in the evening dim,
And the golden light stream through.

And the soul a glorious bridge will make
Out of the golden bars,
And all its priceless treasures take
Where shine the eternal stars.

JOHN GODFREY SAXE.

THE OLD MAN'S MOTTO.

"GIVE me a motto," said a youth
To one whom years had rendered wise;
"Some pleasant thought, or weighty truth,
That briefest syllables comprise;
Some word of warning or of cheer
To grave upon my signet here.

"And, reverend father," said the boy,
"Since life, they say, is ever made
A mingled web of grief and joy;
Since cares may come and pleasures fade, —
Pray, let the motto have a range
Of meaning matching every change."

"Sooth!" said the sire, "methinks you ask
A labor something over-nice,
That well a finer brain might task.
What think you, lad, of this device
(Older than I, though I am gray).
'Tis simple, — 'This will pass away.'

"When wafted on by Fortune's breeze,
In endless peace thou seem'st to glide,
Prepare betimes for rougher seas,
And check the boast of foolish pride;
Though smiling joy is thine to-day,
Remember, 'This will pass away!'

"When all the sky is draped in black,
And, beaten by tempestuous gales,
Thy shuddering ship seems all a-wrack,
Then trim again thy tattered sails;
To grim Despair be not a prey;
Bethink thee, 'This will pass away.'

"Thus, O my son, be not o'er-proud,
Nor yet cast down; judge thou aright;
When skies are clear, expect the cloud;
In darkness, wait the coming light;
Whatever be thy fate to-day,
Remember, 'This will pass away!'"

I'M GROWING OLD.

My days pass pleasantly away;
My nights are blest with sweetest sleep;
I feel no symptoms of decay;
I have no cause to mourn nor weep;
My foes are impotent and shy;
My friends are neither false nor cold,
And yet, of late, I often sigh, —
I'm growing old!

My growing talk of olden times,
My growing thirst for early news,
My growing apathy to rhymes,
My growing love of easy shoes,
My growing hate of crowds and noise,
My growing fear of taking cold,
All whisper, in the plainest voice,
I'm growing old!

I'm growing fonder of my staff;
I'm growing dimmer in the eyes;
I'm growing fainter in my laugh;
I'm growing deeper in my sighs;
I'm growing careless of my dress;
I'm growing frugal of my gold;
I'm growing wise; I'm growing, — yes, —
I'm growing old!

I see it in my changing taste;
I see it in my changing hair;
I see it in my growing waist;
I see it in my growing heir;
A thousand signs proclaim the truth,
As plain as truth was ever told,
That, even in my vaunted youth
I'm growing old.

Ah me! my very laurels breathe
The tale in my reluctant ears,
And every boon the Hours bequeath
But makes me debtor to the Years!
E'en Flattery's honeyed words declare
The secret she would fain withhold;
And tells me in "How young you are!"
I'm growing old.

Thanks for the years! — whose rapid flight
My sombre Muse too sadly sings;
Thanks for the gleams of golden light
That tint the darkness of their wings;
The light that beams from out the sky,
Those heavenly mansions to unfold
Where all are blest, and none may sigh,
"I'm growing old!"

SOMEWHERE.

Somewhere — somewhere a happy clime there is,
A land that knows not unavailing woes,
Where all the clashing elements of this
Discordant scene are hushed in deep repose.
Somewhere — somewhere (ah me, that land to win!)
In some bright realm, beyond the farthest main,
Where trees of knowledge bear no fruit of sin,
And buds of pleasure blossom not in pain.
Somewhere — somewhere an end of mortal strife
With our immortal yearnings; nevermore
The outer warring with the inner life
Till both are wretched! Ah, that happy shore!
Where shines for aye the soul's refulgent sun,
And life is love, and love and joy are one!

LITTLE JERRY, THE MILLER.

Beneath the hill you may see the mill
Of wasting wood and crumbling stone;
The wheel is dripping and clattering still,
But Jerry, the miller, is dead and gone.

Year after year, early and late,
Alike in summer and winter weather,
He pecked the stones and calked the gate,
And mill and miller grew old together.

"Little Jerry!" — 'twas all the same, —
They loved him well who called him so;
And whether he'd ever another name,
Nobody ever seemed to know.

'Twas, "Little Jerry, come grind my rye";
And "Little Jerry, come grind my wheat";
And "Little Jerry" was still the cry,
From matron bold and maiden sweet.

'Twas, "Little Jerry" on every tongue,
And so the simple truth was told;
For Jerry was little when he was young,
And Jerry was little when he was old.

But what in size he chanced to lack,
That Jerry made up in being strong;
I've seen a sack upon his back
As thick as the miller, and quite as long.

Always busy, and always merry,
Always doing his very best,
A notable wag was little Jerry,
Who uttered well his standing jest.

How Jerry lived is known to fame,
But how he died there's none may know;
One autumn day the rumor came,
"The brook and Jerry are very low."

And then 'twas whispered, mournfully,
The leech had come, and he was dead;
And all the neighbors flocked to see;
"Poor little Jerry!" was all they said.

They laid him in his earthly bed, —
His miller's coat his only shroud;
"Dust to dust," the parson said,
And all the people wept aloud.

For he had shunned the deadly sin,
And not a grain of over-toll
Had ever dropped into his bin,
To weigh upon his parting soul.

Beneath the hill there stands the mill,
Of wasting wood and crumbling stone;
The wheel is dripping and clattering still,
But Jerry, the miller, is dead and gone.

WOULDN'T YOU LIKE TO KNOW!

A MADRIGAL.

I KNOW a girl with teeth of pearl,
And shoulders white as snow;
She lives, — ah! well,
I must not tell, —
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her sunny hair is wondrous fair,
And wavy in its flow;
Who made it less
One little tress. —
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her eyes are blue (celestial hue!)
And dazzling in their glow;
On whom they beam
With melting gleam, —
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her lips are red and finely wed,
Like roses ere they blow;
What lover sips
Those dewy lips, —
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her fingers are like lilies fair
When lilies fairest grow;
Whose hand they press
With fond caress, —
Wouldn't you like to know?

Her foot is small, and has a fall
Like snow-flakes on the snow;
And where it goes
Beneath the rose, —
Wouldn't you like to know?

She has a name, the sweetest name
That language can bestow.
'Twould break the spell
If I should tell, —
Wouldn't you like to know?

TREASURE IN HEAVEN.

Every coin of earthly treasure
We have lavished, upon earth,
For our simple worldly pleasure,
May be reckoned something worth;
For the spending was not losing,
Though the purchase were but small;
It has perished with the using;
We have had it, — that is all!

All the gold we leave behind us
When we turn to dust again
(Though our avarice may blind us),
We have gathered quite in vain;
Since we neither can direct it,
By the winds of fortune tossed,
Nor in other worlds expect it;
What we hoarded, we have lost.

But each merciful oblation —
(Seed of pity wisely sown),
What we gave in self-negation,
We may safely call our own;
For the treasure freely given
Is the treasure that we hoard,
Since the angels keep in Heaven
What is lent unto the Lord!

TO MY LOVE.

"Da mi basia." — Catullus.

Kiss me softly, and speak to me low;
Malice has ever a vigilant ear;
What if Malice were lurking near?
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

Kiss me softly and speak to me low;
Envy too has a watchful ear;
What if Envy should chance to hear?
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

Kiss me softly and speak to me low;
Trust me, darling, the time is near
When we may love with never a fear;
Kiss me, dear!
Kiss me softly and speak to me low.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

[*From The Lady of the Lake.*]

SUMMER DAWN AT LOCH KATRINE.

The summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch Katrine blue;
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled but dimpled not for joy;
The mountain shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;
In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
The water-lily to the light
Her chalice reared of silver bright;
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemmed with dew-drops, led her fawn;
The gray mist left the mountain side,
The torrent showed its glistening pride;
Invisible in fleckèd sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;

The blackbird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush:
In answer cooed the cushat dove
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

[*From The Lady of the Lake.*]

A SCENE IN THE HIGHLANDS.

THE western waves of ebbing day
Rolled o'er the glen their level way;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire,
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.
The rocky summit, split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever decked
Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lacked they many a banner fair;
For, from their shivered brows displayed,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dewdrops sheen,
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

Boon nature scattered, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child,
Here eglantine embalmed the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale and violet flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow bower;
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Grouped their dark hues with every stain
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Gray birch and aspen wept beneath;
Aloft the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shattered trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrowed sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glist'ning streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

[*From The Lady of the Lake.*]

A PICTURE OF ELLEN.

AND ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
Of finer form, or lovelier face!
What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown, —
The sportive toil, which, short and light,
Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
Served too in hastier swell to show
Short glimpses of a breast of snow:
What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had trained her pace, —
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew;
E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread;

What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of her mountain tongue, —
Those silver sounds so soft, so dear,
The listener held his breath to hear!

[*From The Lady of the Lake.*]

PATERNAL LOVE.

Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven:
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!

[*From The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*]

MELROSE ABBEY BY MOONLIGHT.

If thou would'st view fair Melrose aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Gild, but to flout, the ruins gray.
When the broken arches are black in night,
And each shafted oriel glimmers white;
When the cold light's uncertain shower
Streams on the ruined central tower;
When buttress and buttress, alternately,
Seem framed of ebon and ivory;
When silver edges the imagery,
And the scrolls that teach thee to live and die;
When distant Tweed is heard to rave,
And the owlet to hoot o'er the dead man's grave,
Then go — but go alone the while —
Then view St. David's ruined pile;
And, home returning, soothly swear,
Was never scene so sad and fair!

[*From The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*]

LOVE.

In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;
In war he mounts the warrior's steed;
In halls, in gay attire is seen;
In hamlets, dances on the green.
Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below, and saints above;
For love is heaven, and heaven is love.

. . . . .

True love's the gift which God has given
To man alone beneath the heaven;
It is not fantasy's hot fire,
Whose wishes, soon as granted fly;
It liveth not in fierce desire.
With dead desire it doth not die;
It is the secret sympathy,
The silver link, the silken tie,
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,
In body and in soul can bind.

[*From The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*]

BREATHES THERE THE MAN.

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land!
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned,
From wandering on a foreign strand!
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;
For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power and pelf,
The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

O Caledonia! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! what mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band,
That knits me to thy rugged strand!
Still, as I view each well-known scene,
Think what is now, and what hath been,
Seems, as to me, of all bereft,
Sole friends thy woods and streams were left;
And thus I love them better still
Even in extremity of ill.
By Yarrow's stream still let me stray,
Though none should guide my feeble way;
Still feel the breeze down Ettrick break,
Although it chill my withered cheek;
Still lay my head by Teviot Stone,
Though there, forgotten and alone,
The bard may draw his parting groan.

[*From Ivanhoe.*]

REBECCA'S HYMN.

When Israel, of the Lord beloved,
Out from the land of bondage came,
Her fathers' God before her moved,
An awful guide in smoke and flame.
By day, along the astonished lands
The cloudy pillar glided slow;
By night, Arabia's crimsoned sands
Returned the fiery column's glow.

There rose the choral hymn of praise,
And trump and timbrel answered keen,
And Zion's daughters poured their lays,
With priest's and warrior's voice between.
No portents now our foes amaze,
Forsaken Israel wanders lone;
Our fathers would not know Thy ways,
And Thou hast left them to their own.

But present still, though now unseen!
When brightly shines the prosperous day,
Be thoughts of Thee a cloudy screen
To temper the deceitful ray.
And, oh, when stoops on Judah's path
In shade and storm the frequent night,
Be Thou, long suffering, slow to wrath,
A burning and a shining light!

Our harps we left by Babel's streams,
The tyrant's jest, the Gentile's scorn;
No censer round our altar beams,
And mute are timbrel, harp, and horn.
But Thou hast said, The blood of goat,
The flesh of rams I will not prize;
A contrite heart, a humble thought,
Are mine accepted sacrifice.

[*From Redgauntlet.*]

PAYMENT IN STORE.

As lords their laborers' hire delay,
Fate quits our toil with hopes to come,
Which, if far short of present pay,
Still owns a debt and names a sum.

Quit not the pledge, frail sufferer, then,
Although a distant date be given;
Despair is treason towards men,
And blasphemy to Heaven.

[*From The Betrothed.*]

FAITH IN UNFAITH.

Woman's faith and woman's trust—
Write the characters in dust:
Stamp them on the running stream,
Print them on the moon's pale beam,
And each evanescent letter
Shall be clearer, firmer, better,
And more permanent, I ween,
Than the thing those letters mean.

I have strained the spider's thread
'Gainst the promise of a maid;
I have weighed a grain of sand
'Gainst her plight of heart and hand;
I told my true love of the token
How her faith proved light and her word was broken;
Again her word and truth she plight,
And I believed them again ere night.

WANDERING WILLIE.

All joy was bereft me the day that you left me,
And climbed the tall vessel to sail yon high sea;
O weary betide it! I wandered beside it,
And banned it for parting my Willie and me.

Far o'er the wave hast thou followed thy fortune,
Oft fought the squadrons of France and of Spain;
Ae kiss of welcome's worth twenty at parting,
Now I hae gotten my Willie again.

When the sky it was mirk, and the winds they were wailing,
I sat on the beach wi' the tear in my ee,
And thought of the bark where my Willie was sailing,
And wished that the tempest could a' blaw on me.

Now that thy gallant ship rides at her moorings,
Now that my wanderer's in safety at hame,
Music to me were the wildest winds' roaring,
That e'er o'er Inch-Keith drove the dark ocean faem.

When the lights they did blaze, and the guns they did rattle,
And blithe was each heart for the great victory,
In secret I wept for the dangers of battle,
And thy glory itself was scarce comfort for me.

But now shalt thou tell, while I eagerly listen,
Of each bold adventure, and every brave scar;
And trust me, I'll smile, though my een they may glisten;
For sweet after danger's the tale of the war.

And oh, how we doubt when there's distance 'tween lovers,
When there's naething to speak to the heart thro' the ee;
How often the kindest and warmest prove rovers,
And the love of the faithfullest ebbs like the sea.

Till, at times — could I help it? — I pined and I pondered
If love could change notes like the bird on the tree —
Now I'll ne'er ask if thine eyes may have wandered,
Enough, thy leal heart has been constant to me.

THE SUN UPON THE WEIRDLAW HILL.

The sun upon the Weirdlaw Hill,
In Ettrick's vale is sinking sweet;
The western wind is hush and still,
The lake lies sleeping at my feet.
Yet not the landscape to mine eye
Bears those bright hues that once it bore;
Though evening, with her richest dye,
Flames o'er the hills of Ettrick's shore.

With listless look along thy plain,
I see Tweed's silver current glide,
And coldly mark the holy fane
Of Melrose rise in ruined pride.
The quiet lake, the balmy air,
The hill, the stream, the tower, the tree, —
Are they still such as once they were?
Or is the dreary change in me?

Alas, the warped and broken board,
How can it bear the painter's dye!
The harp of strained and tuneless chord,
How to the minstrel's skill reply!
To aching eyes each landscape lowers,
To feverish pulse each gale blows chill;
And Araby's or Eden's bowers
Were barren as this moorland hill.

THE VIOLET.

The violet in her greenwood bower,
Where birchen boughs with hazels mingle,
May boast itself the fairest flower
In glen, or copse, or forest dingle.

Though fair her gems of azure hue,
Beneath the dewdrop's weight reclining;
I've seen an eye of lovelier hue,
More sweet through watery lustre shining.

The summer sun that dew shall dry,
Ere yet the day be past its morrow;
Nor longer in my false love's eye
Remained the tear of parting sorrow.

HELVELLYN.

I climbed the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn,
Lakes and mountains beneath me gleamed misty and wide;
All was still, save by fits, when the eagle was yelling,
And starting around me the echoes replied.
On the right, Striden-edge round the Red-tarn was bending,
And Catchedicam its left verge was defending,
One huge nameless rock in the front was ascending,
When I marked the sad spot where the wanderer had died.

Dark green was the spot 'mid the brown mountain-heather,
Where the pilgrim of nature lay stretched in decay,
Like the corpse of an outcast abandoned to weather,
Till the mountain winds wasted the tenantless clay.
Nor yet quite deserted, though lonely extended,
For, faithful in death, his mute favorite attended,
The much-loved remains of her master defended,
And chased the hill-fox and the raven away.

How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?
When the wind waved his garment, how oft didst thou start?
How many long days and long weeks didst thou number,
Ere he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart?
And, oh! was it meet, that — no requiem read o'er him —
No mother to weep, and no friend to deplore him,
And thou, little guardian, alone stretched before him —
Unhonored the pilgrim from life should depart?

When a prince to the fate of the peasant has yielded,
The tapestry waves dark round the dim-lighted hall;
With scutcheons of silver the coffin is shielded,
And pages stand mute by the canopied pall:
Through the courts, at deep midnight, the torches are gleaming;
In the proudly-arched chapel the banners are beaming,
Far adown the long aisles sacred music is streaming,
Lamenting a chief of the people should fall.

But meeter for thee, gentle lover of nature,
To lay down thy head like the meek mountain lamb,

When, wildered, he drops from some cliff huge in stature,
And draws his last sob by the side of his dam.
And more stately thy couch by this desert lake lying,
Thy obsequies sung by the gray plover flying,
With one faithful friend but to witness thy dying,
In the arms of Helvellyn and Catchedicam.

EMILY SEAVER.

THE ROSE OF JERICHO.

AND was it not enough that, meekly growing,
In lack of all things wherein plants delight,
Cool dews, rich soil, and gentle showers refreshing,
It yet could blossom into beauty bright?

In the hot desert, in the rocky crevice,
By dusty waysides, on the rubbish heap,
Where'er the Lord appoints, it smiles, believing
That where He planteth, He will surely keep!

Nay, this is not enough, the fierce sirocco
Must root it up, and sweep it from its home,
And bear it miles away, across the desert,
Then fling it, ruthless, on the white sea-foam.

Do they thus end, those lives of patient duty,
That grow, through every grief and pain more fair. —
Are they thus cast aside, at length, forgotten?
Ah no! my story is not ended there.

Those roots upon the waves of ocean floating,
That in their desert homes no moisture knew,
Now, at the fount their life-long thirst are quenching,
Whence rise the gentle showers, the nightly dew.

They drink the quickening streams through every fibre,
Until with hidden life each seed shall swell;
Then come the winds of God, his word fulfilling,
And bear them back, where He shall please, to dwell.

Thus live meek spirits, duly schooled to duty, —
The whirlwind storm may sweep them from their place;
What matter if by this affliction driven
Straight to their God, the fountain of all grace?

And when, at length, the final trial cometh,
Though hurled to unknown worlds, they shall not die;
Borne not by winds of wrath, but God's own angels,
They feed upon His love and dwell beneath His eye.

Till by the angel of the resurrection,
One awful blast through heaven and earth be blown;
Then soul and body, met no more to sunder,
That all God's ways are true and just shall own!

HARRIET WINSLOW SEWALL.

WHY THUS LONGING?

WHY thus longing, thus forever sighing
For the far-off, unattained and dim,
While the beautiful, all round thee lying,
Offers up its low, perpetual hymn?

Would'st thou listen to its gentle teaching,
All thy restless yearnings it would still;
Leaf and flower and laden bee are preaching,
Thine own sphere, though humble, first to fill.

Poor indeed thou must be, if around thee
Thou no ray of light and joy canst throw,
If no silken cord of love hath bound thee
To some little world through weal and woe;

If no dear eyes thy fond love can brighten,
No fond voices answer to thine own,
If no brother's sorrow thou canst lighten
By daily sympathy and gentle tone.

Not by deeds that gain the world's applauses,
Not by works that win thee world renown,
Not by martyrdom or vaunted crosses,
Canst thou win and wear the immortal crown.

Daily struggling, though unloved and lonely,
Every day a rich reward will give;
Thou wilt find by hearty striving only,
And truly loving, thou canst truly live.

Dost thou revel in the rosy morning
When all Nature hails the lord of light,
And his smile, nor low nor lofty scorning,
Gladdens hall and hovel, vale and height?

Other hands may grasp the field and forest,
Proud proprietors in pomp may shine,
But with fervent love if thou adorest,
Thou art wealthier, — all the world is thine.

Yet if through earth's wide domains thou rovest,
Sighing that they are not thine alone,
Not those fair fields, but thyself thou lovest,
And their beauty and thy wealth are gone.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

[*From As You Like It.*]

LIFE'S THEATRE.

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in his nurse's arms.
And then, the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then, the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then, the soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel;
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then, the justice,
In fair round belly, with good capon lined,
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose, and pouch on side;
His youthful hose well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shanks; and his big manly voice,
Turning again towards childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion:
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

[*From As You Like It.*]

INGRATITUDE.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude!
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then heigh-ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot!
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remembered not.
"Heigh-ho! sing heigh-ho, &c."

[*From Hamlet.*]

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE.

To be, or not to be, that is the question —
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing end them? To die — to sleep —
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to! — 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die — to sleep —

To sleep!—perchance to dream!—ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death, what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause—there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
When he himself might his *quietus* make
With a bare bodkin! Who would fardels bear,
To groan and sweat under a weary life.
But that the dread of something after death—
That undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveller returns,—puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

[*From Hamlet.*]

GOOD COUNSEL OF POLONIUS TO LAERTES.

Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertertainment
Of each new-hatched, unpledged comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in
Bear it, that the opposer may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
And they in France, of the best rank and station,
Are most select and generous, chief in that.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This above all.—To thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man!

[*From The Merchant of Venice.*]

FALSE APPEARANCES.

The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But being seasoned with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no voice so simple, but assumes
Some mark of virtue on its outward parts.
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false

As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars;
Who, inward searched, have livers white as milk!
And these assume but valor's excrement,
To render them redoubted. Look on beauty,
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight,
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it.
So are those crispèd, snaky, golden locks,
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind
Upon supposèd fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.
Thus ornament is but the guilèd shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest.

[*From The Merchant of Venice.*]

MERCY.

The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown:
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings.
But mercy is above the sceptred sway;
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice.

[*From Troilus and Cressida.*]

CONSTANT EFFORT NECESSARY TO SUPPORT FAME.

Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,
A great-sized monster for ingratitudes:
Those scraps are good deeds past: which are devoured
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
As done: Perseverance, dear my lord,
Keeps honor bright: To have done, is to hang
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery. Take the instant way;
For honor travels in a strait so narrow,
Where one but goes abreast: keep then the path;
For emulation hath a thousand sons,
That one by one pursue. If you give way.
Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,
Like to an entered tide, they all rush by,
And leave you hindmost;—
Or, like a gallant horse fallen in first rank,
Lie there for pavement to the abject rear,
O'errun and trampled on. Then what they do in present,
Though less than yours in past, must o'ertop yours:
For time is like a fashionable host
That slightly shakes his parting guest by the hand;
And with his arms outstretched, as he would fly,
Grasps in the comer. Welcome ever smiles

And farewell goes out sighing. O, let not virtue seek
Remuneration for the thing it was;
For beauty, wit,
High birth, vigor of bone, desert in service,
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
To envious and calumniating time.
One touch of nature makes the whole world kin, —
That all with one consent, praise new-born gauds,
Though they are made and moulded of things past;
And give to dust, that is a little gilt,
More laud than gilt o'er-dusted.
The present eye praises the present object:
Then marvel not, thou great and complete man,
That all the Greeks begin to worship Ajax;
Since things in motion sooner catch the eye
Than what not stirs.

[*From Henry VIII.*]

LIFE'S VICISSITUDES.

FAREWELL, a long farewell to all my greatness!
This is the state of man: To-day he puts forth
The tender leaves of hope, to-morrow blossoms,
And bears his blushing honors thick upon him;
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost,
And when he thinks, good easy man, full surely
His greatness is a ripening, nips his root
And then he falls as I do. I have ventured,
Like little wanton boys, that swim on bladders,
These many summers in a sea of glory;
But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride
At length broke under me; and now has left me,
Weary and old with service, to the mercy
Of a rude stream, that must for ever hide me.
Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye!

[*From Measure for Measure.*]

FEAR OF DEATH.

AY, but to die, and go we know not where;
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
This sensible warm motion to become
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;
To be imprisoned in the viewless winds,
And blown with restless violence round about
The pendent world: or to be worse than worst
Of those, that lawless and incertain thoughts
Imagine howling: 'tis too horrible!
The weariest and most loathèd worldly life,
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
Can lay on nature, is a paradise
To what we fear of death!

[*From The Tempest.*]

END OF ALL EARTHLY GLORY.

OUR revels now are ended: these our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air;
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,

Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve:
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind! We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

[*From Cymbeline.*]

FEAR NO MORE.

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
  Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done.
  Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Fear no more the frown o' the great,
  Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe and eat,
  To thee the reed is as the oak.
The sceptre, learning, physic, must,
All follow this, and come to dust.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,
  Nor th' all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash,
  Thou hast finished joy and moan.
All lovers young, all lovers must,
Consign to thee, and come to dust,

[*From Venus and Adonis.*]

THE HORSE OF ADONIS.

Look, when a painter would surpass the life,
In limning out a well-proportioned steed,
His art with Nature's workmanship at strife,
As if the dead the living should exceed:
So did this horse excel a common one
In shape, in courage, color, pace and bone.

Round-hoofed, short-jointed, fetlocks shag and long,
Broad breast, full eyes, small head, and nostrils wide,
High crest, short ears, straight legs, and passing strong,
Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide:
Look, what a horse should have, he did not lack,
Save a proud rider on so proud a back.

Sometimes he scuds far off, and then he stares;
Anon he starts at stirring of a feather,
To bid the wind a base he now prepares
And whe'r he run, or fly, they know not whether.
For through his mane and tail the high wind sings,
Fanning the hairs, which wave like feathered wings.

LOVE, THE SOLACE OF PRESENT CALAMITY.

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee,—and then my state
(Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth) sings hymns at heaven's gate;
  For thy sweet love remembered, such wealth brings,
  That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

LOVE, THE RETRIEVER OF PAST LOSSES.

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long-since cancelled woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight.
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er,
The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan.
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored, and sorrows end.

NO SPRING WITHOUT THE BELOVED.

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud pied April, dressed in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laughed and leaped with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odor and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew.
Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seemed it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

LOVE UNALTERABLE.

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no! it is an ever-fixèd mark,
That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks
But bears it out e'en to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

TO MY SOUL.

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
Fooled by those rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within, and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?

Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? Is this thy body's end?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store:
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men,
And, death once dead, there's no more dying then.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

ONE WORD IS TOO OFTEN PROFANED.

One word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it,
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the heavens reject not:
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?

LOVE'S PHILOSOPHY.

The fountains mingle with the river,
And the rivers with the ocean,
The winds of heaven mix forever
With a sweet emotion;
Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one another's being mingle,—
Why not I with thine?

See the mountains kiss high heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven
If it disdained its brother;
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea;
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?

TO A SKYLARK.

Hail to thee, blithe spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher,
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven,
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight.

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud.
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace-tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-wingèd thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

MUSIC, WHEN SOFT VOICES DIE.

Music, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory,—
Odors, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken.

Rose-leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the belovèd's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

TIME.

Unfathomable Sea! whose waves are years,
Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
Are brackish with the salt of human tears!
Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow
Claspest the limits of mortality!
And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore;
Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Unfathomable Sea?

THE WORLD'S WANDERERS.

Tell me, thou star, whose wings of light
Speed thee in thy fiery flight,
In what cavern of the night
Will thy pinions close now?

Tell me, moon, thou pale and gray
Pilgrim of heaven's homeless way,
In what depth of night or day
Seekest thou repose now?

Weary wind, who wanderest
Like the world's rejected guest,
Hast thou still some secret nest
On the tree or billow?

DEATH.

Death is here, and death is there,
Death is busy everywhere,
All around, within, beneath,
Above, is death,— and we are death.

. . . . .

First our pleasures die,— and then
Our hopes, and then our fears,— and when
These are dead, the debt is due,
Dust claims dust,— and we die too.

All things that we love and cherish,
Like ourselves, must fade and perish;
Such is our rude mortal lot,—
Love itself would, did they not.

THE CLOUD.

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,
From the seas and the streams;
I bear light shades for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,
Lightning, my pilot sits,
In a cavern under, is fettered the thunder,
It struggles and howls by fits;
Over earth and ocean with gentle motion,
This pilot is guiding me,

Lured by the love of the genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,
The spirit he loves, remains;
And I, all the while, bask in heaven's blue smile,
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine sunrise, with his meteor eyes,
And his burning plumes outspread,
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,
When the morning-star shines dead.
As on the jag of a mountain crag,
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,
An eagle alit one moment may sit
In the light of its golden wings.
And when sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,
Its ardors of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orbèd maiden, with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The stars peep behind her and peer;
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim,
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof,
The mountains its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march,
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-colored bow;
The sphere-fire above its soft colors wove,
While the moist earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of earth and water,
And the nursling of the sky:
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain, when with never a stain,
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams,
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise and unbuild it again.

FROM "THE SENSITIVE-PLANT."

A SENSITIVE-plant in a garden grew,
And the young winds fed it with silver dew,
And it opened its fan-like leaves to the light,
And closed them beneath the kisses of night.

And the spring arose on the garden fair,
And the Spirit of Love fell everywhere;
And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast
Rose from the dreams of its wintry rest.

But none ever trembled and panted with bliss
In the garden, the field, or the wilderness,
Like a doe in the noontide with love's sweet want,
As the companionless sensitive-plant.

The snowdrop, and then the violet,
Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,
And their breath was mixed with fresh odor, sent
From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.

Then the pied wind-flowers and the tulip tall,
And narcissi, the fairest among them all,
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream's recess,
Till they die of their own dear loveliness.

And the Naiad-like lily of the vale,
Whom youth makes so fair and passion so pale,
That the light of its tremulous bells is seen
Through their pavilions of tender green;

And the hyacinth purple, and white, and blue,
Which flung from its bells a sweet peal anew
Of music so delicate, soft, and intense,
It was felt like an odor within the sense;

And the rose like a nymph to the bath addrest,
Which unveiled the depth of her glowing breast,
Till, fold after fold, to the fainting air
The soul of her beauty and love lay bare;

And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,
As a Mænad, its moonlight-colored cup,
Till the fiery star, which is its eye,
Gazed through the clear dew on the tender sky;

And the jessamine faint, and the sweet tuberose,
The sweetest flower for scent that blows;
And all rare blossoms from every clime
Grew in that garden in perfect prime.

And on the stream whose inconstant bosom
Was prankt, under boughs of embowering blossom,
With golden and green light, slanting through
Their heaven of many a tangled hue,

Broad water-lilies lay tremulously,
And starry river-buds glimmered by,
And around them the soft stream did glide and dance
With a motion of sweet sound and radiance.

. . . . .

And from this undefiled Paradise
The flowers,— as an infant's awakening eyes
Smile on its mother, whose singing sweet
Can first lull, and at last must awaken it,—

When heaven's blithe winds had unfolded them,
As mine-lamps enkindle a hidden gem,
Shone smiling to heaven, and every one
Shared joy in the light of the gentle sun;

For each one was interpenetrated
With the light and the odor its neighbor shed,
Like young lovers whom youth and love make dear,
Wrapped and filled by their mutual atmosphere.

But the sensitive-plant, which could give small fruit
Of the love which it felt from the leaf to the root,
Received more than all, it loved more than ever,
Where none wanted but it, could belong to the giver,—

For the sensitive-plant has no bright flower;
Radiance and odor are not its dower;
It loves, even like love, its deep heart is full,
It desires what it has not, the beautiful!

FROM "TO A LADY WITH A GUITAR."

The artist who this idol wrought,
To echo all harmonious thought,
Felled a tree, while on the steep
The woods were in their winter sleep,
Rocked in that repose divine
On the wind-swept Apennine;
And dreaming, some of autumn past,
And some of spring approaching fast,
And some of April buds and showers,
And some of songs in July bowers,
And all of love; and so this tree,—
O that such our death may be!—
Died in sleep, and felt no pain,
To live in happier form again:
From which, beneath heaven's fairest star,
The artist wrought this loved guitar,
And taught it justly to reply,
To all who question skilfully,
In language gentle as thine own;
Whispering in enamored tone
Sweet oracles of woods and dells,
And summer winds in sylvan cells;
For it had learnt all harmonies
Of the plains and of the skies,
Of the forests and the mountains,
And the many-voicèd fountains;
The clearest echoes of the hills,
The softest notes of falling rills,
The melodies of birds and bees,
The murmuring of summer seas,
And pattering rain, and breathing dew,
And airs of evening; and it knew
That seldom-heard mysterious sound,
Which, driven on its diurnal round,
As it floats through boundless day,
Our world enkindles on its way,—
All this it knows, but will not tell
To those who cannot question well
The spirit that inhabits it;
It talks according to the wit
Of its companions; and no more
Is heard than has been felt before,
By those who tempt it to betray
These secrets of an elder day.
But, sweetly as its answers will
Flatter hands of perfect skill,
It keeps its highest, holiest tone
For our belovèd friend alone.

GOOD-NIGHT.

Good-night? ah! no; the hour is ill
  Which severs those it should unite;
Let us remain together still,
  Then it will be *good* night.

How can I call the lone night good,
  Though thy sweet wishes wing its flight?
Be it not said, thought, understood,
  That it will be *good* night.

To hearts which near each other move
  From evening close to morning light,
The night is good; because, my love,
  They never *say* good-night.

MUTABILITY.

We are as clouds that veil the midnight moon;
  How restlessly they speed, and gleam, and quiver,
Streaking the darkness radiantly!—yet soon
  Night closes round, and they are lost forever:

Or like forgotten lyres, whose dissonant strings
Give various response to each varying blast,
To whose frail frame no second motion brings
One mood or modulation like the last.

We rest — a dream has power to poison sleep:
We rise — one wandering thought pollutes the day;
We feel, conceive or reason, laugh or weep;
Embrace fond woe, or cast our cares away.

It is the same! — For, be it joy or sorrow,
The path of its departure still is free;
Man's yesterday may ne'er be like his morrow;
Naught may endure but mutability.

* * *

WILLIAM SHENSTONE.

STANZAS FROM "THE SCHOOLMISTRESS."

In every village marked with little spire,
Embowered in trees, and hardly known to fame,
There dwells, in lowly shed, and mean attire,
A matron old, whom we schoolmistress name;
Who boasts unruly brats with birch to tame;
They grieven sore, in piteous durance pent,
Awed by the power of this relentless dame;
And oft-times, on vagaries idly bent,
For unkempt hair, or task unconned, are sorely shent.

And all in sight doth rise a birchen tree,
Which learning near her little dome did stow;
Whilom a twig of small regard to see,
Though now so wide its waving branches flow,
And work the simple vassals mickle woe;
For not a wind might curl the leaves that blew,
But their limbs shuddered, and their pulse beat low;
And as they looked they found their horror grow,
And shaped it into rods, and tingled at the view.

Near to this dome is found a patch so green,
On which the tribe their gambols do display;
And at the door imprisoning board is seen,
Lest weakly wights of smaller size should stray;
Eager, perdie, to bask in sunny day!
The noises intermixed, which thence resound,
Do learning's little tenement betray;
Where sits the dame, disguised in look profound
And eyes her fairy throng, and turns her wheel around.

Her cap, far whiter than the driven snow,
Emblem right meet of decency does yield:
Her apron dyed in grain, as blue, I trow,
As is the harebell that adorns the field:
And in her hand, for sceptre, she does wield
Tway birchen sprays; with anxious fear entwined,
With dark distrust, and sad repentance filled;

And steadfast hate, and sharp affliction joined,
And fury uncontrolled, and chastisement unkind.

. . . . . .

A russet stole was o'er her shoulders thrown;
A russet kirtle fenced the nipping air;
'Twas simple russet, but it was her own;
'Twas her own country bred the flock so fair,
'Twas her own labor did the fleece prepare:
And, sooth to say, her pupils, ranged around,
Through pious awe, did term it passing rare;
For they in gaping wonderment abound,
And think no doubt, she been the greatest wight on ground.

Albeit ne flattery did corrupt her truth,
Ne pompous title did debauch her ear;
Goody, good-woman, gossip, n'aunt, forsooth,
Or dame, the sole additions she did hear;
Yet these she challenged, these she held right dear:
Nor would esteem him act as mought behove,
Who should not honored eld with these revere:
For never title yet so mean could prove,
But there was eke a mind which did that title love.

One ancient hen she took delight to feed;
The plodding pattern of the busy dame:
Which, ever and anon, impelled by need,
Into her school, begirt with chickens, came;
Such favor did her past deportment claim;
And, if neglect had lavished on the ground
Fragments of bread, she would collect the same,
For well she knew, and quaintly could expound,
What sin it were to waste the smallest crumb she found.

. . . .

Here oft the dame, on Sabbath's decent eve,
Hymnèd such psalms as Sternhold forth did mete;
If winter 'twere, she to her hearth did cleave,
But in her garden found a summer seat;
Sweet melody to hear her then repeat
How Israel's sons, beneath a foreign king,
While taunting foemen did a song entreat,
All, for the nonce, untuning every string,
Uphung their useless lyres — small heart had they to sing.

For she was just, and friend to virtuous lore,
And passed much time in truly virtuous deed;
And, in those elfins' ears, would oft deplore
The times, when truth by popish rage did bleed;
And tortuous death was true devotion's meed;
And simple Faith in iron chains did mourn,
That nould on wooden image place her creed;
And lawnly saints in smouldering flames did burn:
Ah! dearest Lord, forefend thilk days should ere return.

In elbow-chair, like that of Scottish stem,
By the sharp tooth of cankering eld defaced,
In which, when he receives his diadem,

Our sovereign prince and liefest liege is placed.
The matron sate; and some with rank she graced.
(The source of children's and of courtiers' pride!)
Redressed affronts, for vile affronts there passed;
And warned them not the fretful to deride,
But love each other dear, whatever them betide.

Right well she knew each temper to descry;
To thwart the proud and the submiss to raise;
Some with vile copper-prize exalt on high,
And some entice with pittance small of praise;
And other some with baleful sprig she frays ;
E'en absent, she the reins of power doth hold,
While with quaint arts, the giddy crowd she sways,
Forewarned, if little bird their pranks behold,
'Twill whisper in her ear, and all the scene unfold.

WRITTEN AT AN INN AT HENLEY.

To thee, fair Freedom, I retire
From flattery, cards, and dice, and din;
Nor art thou found in mansions higher
Than the low cot or humble inn.

'Tis here with boundless power I reign,
And every health which I begin
Converts dull port to bright champagne!
Such freedom crowns it at an inn,

I fly from pomp, I fly from plate,
I fly from Falsehood's specious grin;
Freedom I love, and form I hate,
And choose my lodgings at an inn.

Here, waiter! take my sordid ore,
Which lackeys else might hope to win;
It buys what courts have not in store,
It buys me freedom at an inn.

Whoe'er has travelled life's dull round,
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
His warmest welcome at an inn.

JAMES SHIRLEY.

[*From The Contention of Ajax and Ulysses.*]

DEATH THE LEVELLER.

The glories of our birth and state
Are shadows, not substantial things;
There is no armor against Fate —
Death lays his icy hand on kings.
Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crooked scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at last must yield —
They tame but one another still;
Early or late
They stoop to Fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath,
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow —
Then boast no more your mighty deeds;
Upon Death's purple altar, now,
See where the victor-victim bleeds.
All heads must come
To the cold tomb —
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

SONNET TO SLEEP.

Come, sleep, O sleep, the certain knot of peace,
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,
The indifferent judge between the high and low!
With shield of proof, shield me from out the prease
Of those fierce darts, Despair at me doth throw:
O make me in those civil wars to cease!
I will good tribute pay if thou do so.
Take thou of me smooth pillows, sweetest bed;
A chamber deaf to noise, and blind to light;
A rosy garland, and a weary head;
And if these things, as being thine by right,
Move not thy heavy grace, thou shalt in me,
Livelier than elsewhere, Stella's image see.

LYDIA HUNTLEY SIGOURNEY.

FAREWELL OF THE SOUL TO THE BODY.

Companion dear! the hour draws nigh;
The sentence speeds — *to die, to die.*
So long in mystic union held,
So close with strong embrace compelled,
How canst thou bear the dread decree,
That strikes thy clasping nerves from me?
To Him who on this mortal shore,
The same encircling vestment wore,
To Him I look, to Him I bend,
To Him thy shuddering frame commend,
If I have ever caused thee pain,
The throbbing breast, the burning brain,
With cares and vigils turned thee pale,
And scorned thee when thy strength did fail —
Forgive! — Forgive! — thy task doth cease,
Friend! Lover! — let us part in peace.
If thou didst sometimes check my force,
Or, trifling, stay mine upward course,
Or lure from Heaven my wavering trust,
Or bow my drooping wing to dust —
I blame thee not, the strife is done,
I knew thou wert the weaker one,
The vase of earth, the trembling clod,
Constrained to hold the breath of God.
— Well hast thou in my service wrought;
Thy brow hath mirrored forth my thought,
To wear my smile thy lip hath glowed,
Thy tear, to speak my sorrows, flowed:
Thine ear hath borne me rich supplies
Of sweetly varied melodies;
Thy hands my prompted deeds have done,
Thy feet upon mine errands run;
Yes, thou hast marked my bidding well,
Faithful and true! farewell, farewell!

Go to thy rest. A quiet bed
Meek mother Earth with flowers shall spread.
Where I no more thy sleep may break
With fevered dream, nor rudely wake
Thy wearied eye.

Oh, quit thy hold,
For thou art faint, and chill, and cold,
And long thy gasp and groan of pain
Have bound me pitying in thy chain,
Though angels urge me hence to soar,
Where I shall share thine ills no more.
Yet we shall meet. To soothe thy pain
Remember — we shall meet again.
Quell with this hope the victor's sting,
And keep it as a signet-ring,
When the dire worm shall pierce thy breast,
And nought but ashes mark thy rest,
When stars shall fall, and skies grow dark,
And proud suns quench their glow-worm spark,
Keep thou that hope, to light thy gloom,
Till the last trumpet rends the tomb.
—Then shalt thou glorious rise, and fair,
Nor spot, nor stain, nor wrinkle bear,
And I, with hovering wing elate,
The bursting of thy bonds shall wait,
And breathe the welcome of the sky—
"No more to part, no more to die,
Co-heir of Immortality."

BENEVOLENCE.

Whose is the gold that glitters in the mine?
And whose the silver? Are they not the Lord's?
And lo! the cattle on a thousand hills,
And the broad earth with all her gushing springs
Are they not His who made them?

Ye who hold
Slight tenantry therein, and call your lands
By your own names, and lock your gathered gold
From him who in his bleeding Saviour's name
Doth ask a part, whose shall those riches be
When, like the grass-blade from the autumn frost,
Ye fall away?

Point out to me the forms
That in your treasure-chambers shall enact
Glad mastership, and revel where you toiled
Sleepless and stern. Strange faces are they all.
O man! whose wrinkling labor is for heirs
Thou knowest not who, thou in thy mouldering bed,
Unkenned, unchronicled of them, shall sleep;
Nor will they thank thee, that thou didst bereave
Thy soul of good for them.

Now, thou mayest give
The famished food, the prisoner liberty,
Light to the darkened mind, to the lost soul
A place in heaven. Take thou the privilege
With solemn gratitude. Speck as thou art
Upon earth's surface, gloriously exult
To be co-worker with the King of kings.

THE CORAL INSECT.

Toil on! toil on! ye ephemeral train,
Who build on the tossing and treacherous main;
Toil on! for the wisdom of man ye mock,
With your sand-based structures, and domes of rock;
Your columns the fathomless fountains lave,
And your arches spring up through the crested wave;
Ye're a puny race, thus boldly to rear
A fabric so vast, in a realm so drear.

Ye bind the deep with your secret zone.
The ocean is sealed, and the surge a stone;
Fresh wreaths from the coral pavement spring,
Like the terraced pride of Assyria's king:

The turf looks green where the breakers rolled,
O'er the whirlpool ripens the rind of gold,
The sea-snatched isle is the home of men,
And mountains exult where the wave hath been.

But why do ye plant 'neath the billows dark
The wrecking reef for the gallant bark?
There are snares enough on the tented field;
'Mid the blossomed sweets that the valleys yield;
There are serpents to coil ere the flowers are up:
There's a poison drop in man's purest cup;
There are foes that watch for his cradle breath,
And why need ye sow the floods with death?

With mouldering bones the deeps are white,
From the ice-clad pole to the tropics bright;
The mermaid hath twisted her fingers cold
With the mesh of the sea-boy's curls of gold;
And the gods of ocean have frowned to see
The mariner's bed 'mid their halls of glee;
Hath earth no graves? that ye thus must spread
The boundless sea with the thronging dead?

Ye build! ye build! but ye enter not in;
Like the tribes whom the desert devoured in their sin;
From the land of promise, ye fade and die,
Ere its verdure gleams forth on your wearied eye.
As the cloud-crowned pyramids' founders sleep
Noteless and lost in oblivion deep,
Ye slumber unmarked 'mid the desolate main,
While the wonder and pride of your works remain.

WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS.

PROGRESS IN DENIAL.

"Yet, onward still!" the spirit cries within,
'Tis I that must repay thee. Mortal fame,
If won, is but at best the hollow din,
The vulgar freedom with a mighty name;
Seek not this music,—ask not this acclaim,
But in the strife find succor;—for the toil
Pursued for such false barter ends in shame,
As certainly as that which seeks but spoil!
Best recompense he finds, who, to his task
Brings a proud, patient spirit that will wait,
Nor for the guerdon stoop, nor vainly ask
Of fate or fortune,—but with right good-will,
Go, working on, and uncomplaining still,
Assured of fit reward, or soon or late!

SOLACE OF THE WOODS.

Woods, waters, have a charm to soothe the ear,
When common sounds have vexed it. When the day
Grows sultry, and the crowd is in thy way,
And working in thy soul much coil and care,—
Betake thee to the forests. In the shade

Of pines, and by the side of purling streams
That prattle all their secrets in their dreams,
Unconscious of a listener,—unafraid;
Thy soul shall feel their freshening, and the truth
Of nature then, reviving in thy heart,
Shall bring thee the best feelings of thy youth,
When in all natural joys thy joy had part,
Ere lucre and the narrowing toils of trade
Had turned thee to the thing thou wast not made.

RECOMPENSE.

Not profitless the game, even when we lose,
Nor wanting in reward the thankless toil;
The wild adventure that the man pursues,
Requites him, though he gather not the spoil:
Strength follows labor, and its exercise
Brings independence, fearlessness of ill,—
Courage and pride,—all attributes we prize;—
Though their fruits fail, not the less precious still.
Though fame withholds the trophy of desire,
And men deny, and the impatient throng
Grow heedless, and the strains protracted, tire;—
Not wholly vain the minstrel and the song,
If, striving to arouse one heavenly tone
In others' hearts, it wakens up his own.

And this, methinks, were no unseemly boast,
In him who thus records the experience
Of one, the humblest of that erring host,
Whose labors have been thought to need defence.
What though he reap no honors,—what though death
Rise terrible between him and the wreath,
That had been his reward, ere, in the dust,
He too is dust; yet hath he in his heart,
The happiest consciousness of what is just,
Sweet, true, and beautiful,—which will not part
From his possession. In this happy faith,
He knows that life is lovely,—that all things
Are sacred;—that the air is full of wings
Bent heavenward,—and that bliss is born of scath!

HEART ESSENTIAL TO GENIUS.

We are not always equal to our fate,
Nor true to our conditions. Doubt and fear
Beset the bravest in their high career,
At moments when the soul, no more elate
With expectation, sinks beneath the time.
The masters have their weakness. "I would climb,"
Said Raleigh, gazing on the highest hill,—
"But that I tremble with the fear to fall!"
Apt was the answer of the high-souled Queen,—
"If thy heart fail thee, never climb at all!"
The heart! if that be sound, confirms the rest,
Crowns genius with his lion will and mien,
And, from the conscious virtue in the breast,
To trembling nature gives both strength and will!

FRIENDSHIP.

Though wronged, not harsh my answer! Love is fond,
Even pained,—and rather to his injury bends,
Than chooses to make shipwreck of his friends
By stormy summons. He hath naught beyond
For consolation, if that these be lost;
And rather will he hear of fortune crossed,
Plans baffled, hopes denied,—than take a tone
Resentful,—with a quick and keen reply
To hasty passion and impatient eye,
Such as by noblest natures may be shown,
When the mood vexes! Friendship is a seed
Needs tendance. You must keep it free from weed,
Nor, if the tree has sometimes bitter fruit,
Must you for this lay axe unto the root.

UNHAPPY CHILDHOOD.

That season which all other men regret,
And strive, with boyish longing, to recall,
Which love permits not memory to forget,
And fancy still restores in dreams of all
That boyhood worshipped, or believed, or knew,—
Brings no sweet images to me,—was true,
Only in cold and cloud, in lonely days
And gloomy fancies,—in defrauded claims,
Defeated hopes, denied, denying aims;—
Cheered by no promise,—lighted by no rays,
Warmed by no smile,—no mother's smile,—that smile,
Of all, best suited sorrow to beguile,
And strengthen hope, and, by unmarked degrees,
Encourage to their birth high purposes.

MANHOOD.

Manhood at last!—and, with its consciousness,
Are strength and freedom; freedom to pursue
The purposes of hope,—the godlike bliss,
Born in the struggle for the great and true!
And every energy that should be mine,
This day, I dedicate to its object,—Life!
So help me, Heaven, that never I resign
The duty which devotes me to the strife;
The enduring conflict which demands my strength,
Whether of soul or body, to the last;
The tribute of my years, through all their length;
The future's compensation to the past!
Boys' pleasures are for boyhood,—its best cares
Befit us not in our performing years.

NIGHT-STORM.

This tempest sweeps the Atlantic!—Nevasink
Is howling to the capes! Grim Hatteras cries
Like thousand damnèd ghosts, that on the brink
Lift their dark hands and threat the threatening skies;
Surging through foam and tempest, old Román
Hangs o'er the gulf, and, with his cavernous throat,
Pours out the torrent of his wolfish note,

And bids the billows bear it where they can!
Deep calleth unto deep, and, from the cloud,
Launches the bolt, that, bursting o'er the sea,
Rends for a moment the thick pitchy shroud,
And shows the ship the shore beneath her lee:
Start not, dear wife, no dangers here betide,—
And see, the boy still sleeping at your side!

TRIUMPH.

The grave but ends the struggle! Follows then
The triumph, which, superior to the doom,
Grows loveliest, and looks best, to mortal men,
Purple in beauty, towering o'er the tomb!
Oh! with the stoppage of the impulsive tide
That vexed the impatient heart with needful strife,
The soul that is hope's living, leaps to life,
And shakes her fragrant plumage far and wide!
Eyes follow then in worship which but late
Frowned in defiance, — and the timorous herd,
That sleekly waited for another's word,
Grow bold, at last, to bring,— obeying fate,—
The tribute of their praise, but late denied,—
Tribute of homage which is sometimes,— hate!

ALEXANDER SMITH.

[*From Horton.*]

BARBARA.

On the Sabbath-day,
Through the church-yard old and gray,
Over the crisp and yellow leaves I held my rustling way;
And amid the words of mercy, falling on my soul like balms,
'Mid the gorgeous storms of music — in the mellow organ-calms,
'Mid the upward-streaming prayers, and the rich and solemn psalms,
I stood careless, Barbara.

My heart was otherwhere
While the organ shook the air,
And the priest, with outspread hands, blessed the people with a prayer
But, when rising to go homeward, with a mild and saint-like shine
Gleamed a face of airy beauty with its heavenly eyes on mine —
Gleamed and vanished in a moment — Oh, that face was surely thine
Out of heaven, Barbara!

O pallid, pallid face!
O earnest eyes of grace!
When last I saw thee, dearest, it was in another place.
You came running forth to meet me with my love-gift on your wrist;
The flutter of a long white dress, then all was lost in mist —
A purple stain of agony was on the mouth I kissed,
That wild morning, Barbara!

I searched, in my despair,
Sunny noon and midnight air;
I could not drive away the thought that you were lingering there.
Oh, many and many a winter night I sat when you were gone,
My worn face buried in my hands, beside the fire alone,
Within the dripping church-yard, the rain plashing on your stone,
You were sleeping, Barbara!

'Mong angels, do you think
Of the precious golden link
I clasped around your happy arm while sitting by yon brink?
Or when that night of gliding dance, of laughter and guitars,
Was emptied of its music, and we watched, through latticed bars,
The silent midnight heaven creeping o'er us with its stars,
Till the day broke, Barbara?

In the years I've changed;
Wild and far my heart hath ranged,
And many sins and errors now have been on me avenged;
But to you I have been faithful, whatsoever good I lacked:
I loved you, and above my life still hangs that love intact —
Your love the trembling rainbow, I the reckless cataract —
Still I love you, Barbara!

Yet, love, I am unblest;
With many doubts opprest,
I wander like a desert wind, without a place of rest.
Could I but win you for an hour from off that starry shore,
The hunger of my soul were stilled, for Death hath told you more
Than the melancholy world doth know; things deeper than all lore.
You could teach me, Barbara!

In vain, in vain, in vain!
You will never come again!
There droops upon the dreary hills a mournful fringe of rain;
The gloaming closes slowly round, loud winds are in the tree,
Round selfish shores forever moans the hurt and wounded sea,
There is no rest upon the earth, peace is with Death and thee,
Barbara!

GLASGOW.

SING, poet, 'tis a merry world;
That cottage smoke is rolled and curled
In sport, that every moss
Is happy, every inch of soil; —
Before *me* runs a road of toil
With my grave cut across.
Sing, trailing showers and breezy downs —
I know the tragic hearts of towns.

City! I am true son of thine;
Ne'er dwelt I where great mornings shine
Around the bleating pens;
Ne'er by the rivulets I strayed,
And ne'er upon my childhood weighed
The silence of the glens.
Instead of shores where ocean beats
I hear the ebb and flow of streets.

Black Labor draws his weary waves
Into their secret moaning caves;
But, with the morning light,
That sea again will overflow
With a long, weary sound of woe,
Again to faint in night.
Wave am I in that sea of woes,
Which, night and morning, ebbs and flows.

I dwelt within a gloomy court,
Wherein did never sunbeam sport;
Yet there my heart was stirred —
My very blood did dance and thrill,
When on my narrow window-sill
Spring lighted like a bird.
Poor flowers! I watched them pine for weeks,
With leaves as pale as human cheeks.

Afar, one summer, I was borne;
Through golden vapors of the morn
I heard the hills of sheep:
I trod with a wild ecstasy
The bright fringe of the living sea:
And on a ruined keep
I sat, and watched an endless plain
Blacken beneath the gloom of rain.

Oh, fair the lightly-sprinkled waste,
O'er which a laughing shower has raced!
Oh, fair the April shoots!
Oh, fair the woods on summer days,
While a blue hyacinthine haze
Is dreaming round the roots!
In thee, O city! I discern
Another beauty, sad and stern.

Draw thy fierce streams of blinding ore,
Smite on a thousand anvils, roar
Down to the harbor-bars;
Smoulder in smoky sunsets, flare
On rainy nights; with street and square
Lie empty to the stars.
From terrace proud to alley base
I know thee as my mother's face.

When sunset bathes thee in his gold,
In wreaths of bronze thy sides are rolled,
Thy smoke is dusky fire;
And, from the glory round thee poured,
A sunbeam like an angel's sword
Shivers upon a spire.
Thus have I watched thee, Terror! Dream!
While the blue night crept up the stream.

The wild train plunges in the hills,
He shrieks across the midnight rills;
Streams through the shifting glare,
The roar and flap of foundry fires,
That shake with light the sleeping shires;
And on the moorlands bare
He sees afar a crown of light
Hang o'er thee in the hollow night.

At midnight, when thy suburbs lie
As silent as a noonday sky
When larks with heat are mute,
I love to linger on thy bridge,
All lonely as a mountain ridge,
Disturbed but by my foot;
While the black lazy stream beneath
Steals from its far-off wilds of heath.

And through thy heart as through a dream,
Flows on that black disdainful stream;
All scornfully it flows,
Between the huddled gloom of masts,
Silent as pines unvexed by blasts —
'Tween lamps in streaming rows,
O wondrous sight! O stream of dread!
O long, dark river of the dead!

Afar, the banner of the year
Unfurls: but dimly prisoned here,
'Tis only when I greet
A dropt rose lying in my way,
A butterfly that flutters gay
Athwart the noisy street.
I know the happy Summer smiles
Around thy suburbs, miles on miles.

'Twere neither pæan now, nor dirge,
The flash and thunder of the surge
On flat sands wide and bare;
No haunting joy or anguish dwells
In the green light of sunny dells,
Or in the starry air.
Alike to me the desert flower,
The rainbow laughing o'er the shower.

While o'er thy walls the darkness sails,
I lean against the churchyard rails;
Up in the midnight towers
The belfried spire, the street is dead,
I hear in silence overhead
The clang of iron hours:
It moves me not — I know her tomb
Is yonder in the shapeless gloom.

All raptures of this mortal breath,
Solemnities of life and death,
Dwell in thy noise alone:
Of me thou hast become a part —
Some kindred with my human heart
Lives in thy streets of stone;
For we have been familiar more
Than galley-slave and weary oar.

The beech is dipped in wine; the shower
Is burnished; on the swinging flower
The latest bee doth sit
The low sun stares through dust of gold.
And o'er the darkening heath and wold
The large ghost-moth doth flit.
In every orchard Autumn stands,
With apples in his golden hands.

But all these sights and sounds are strange;
Then wherefore from thee should I range?
Thou hast my kith and kin:
My childhood, youth, and manhood brave;
Thou hast that unforgotten grave
Within thy central din.
A sacredness of love and death
Dwells in thy noise and smoky breath.

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

THE CRICKET.

Little inmate, full of mirth,
Chirping on my humble hearth;
Wheresoe'er be thine abode,
Always harbinger of good,
Pay me for thy warm retreat
With a song most soft and sweet;
In return thou shalt receive
Such a song as I can give.

Though in voice and shape they be
Formed as if akin to thee,
Thou surpassest, happier far,
Happiest grasshoppers that are;
Theirs is but a summer-song,
Thine endures the winter long,
Unimpaired, and shrill, and clear,
Melody throughout the year.

Neither night nor dawn of day
Puts a period to thy lay:
Then, insect! let thy simple song
Cheer the winter evening long;
While, secure from every storm,
In my cottage stout and warm,
Thou shalt my merry minstrel be,
And I'll delight to shelter thee.

THE CLOSE OF SPRING.

The garlands fade that Spring so lately wove,
Each simple flower which she had nursed in dew,
Anemones that spangled every grove,
The primrose wan, and harebell mildly blue.
No more shall violets linger in the dell,
Or purple orchis variegate the plain,
Till Spring again shall call forth every bell,
And dress with humid hands her wreaths again.
Ah! poor humanity! so frail, so fair,
Are the fond visions of thy early day,
Till tyrant passion and corrosive care
Bid all thy fairy colors fade away!
Another May new buds and flowers shall bring;
Ah! why has *Happiness* no second Spring?

FLORENCE SMITH.

[*From Rainbow-Songs.*]

THE PURPLE OF THE POET.

Purple, the passionate color!
Purple, the color of pain!
I clothe myself in the rapture—
I count the suffering gain!

The sea lies gleaming before me,
Pale in the smile of the sun—
No shadow — all golden and azure —
The joy of the day has begun!

Throbbing and yearning forever,
With longing unsatisfied, sweet —
Flushed with the pain and the rapture,
Warm at the sun-god's feet —

In the glow and gloom of the evening
The glory is reached — and o'er-past;
Joy's rose-bloom has ripened to purple —
'Twill fade, but the stars shine at last!

Purple, the passionate color!
Robing the martyr, the king —
Regal in joy and in anguish,
Life's blossom; with, ah! its sting —

Give me the sovereign color —
I'll suffer that I may reign!
The poet's moment of rapture
Is worth the poet's pain!

[*From Rainbow-Songs.*]

THE YELLOW OF THE MISER.

The beautiful color — the color of gold!
How it sparkles and burns in the piled-up dust!
The poets! they know not, they never have told
Of the fadeless color, the color of gold —
Of my god in whom I trust!
Deep down in the earth it winds and it creeps —
In her sluggish old veins 'tis the warm rich blood —
The old mother-monster! how soundly she sleeps!
Come! nearest her heart, where the strong life leaps —
We drink, we bathe in the flood!

. . . . .

Ah, the far-off days! was I ever a child?
—My brain is so dark, and my heart has grown cold.
Those fields where the golden-eyed buttercups smiled
Long ago — did I love them with heart undefiled?
Did I seek the flowers for the gold?

Be still! O thou traitor Remorse, at my heart,
Whining without in the dark at the door —
I know thee, the beggar and thief that thou art,
Lying low at my threshold — I bid thee depart!
Thou shalt dog my footsteps no more.

Wilt thou bring me the faded flowers of my youth —
With hands full of dead leaves, and lips full of lies —
For these shall I yield thee my treasure, in sooth?
Are the buttercup's petals pure gold, say truth!
Wilt thou coin me the daisy's eyes?

I hate them! the smiling flowers in the sun,
And the yellow, smooth rays that they feed on at noon —
Tis the hard cold gold I will have or none!
Come, pluck me the stars down, one by one,
Plant me the pale rich moon!

. . . . .

Ah! the mystical seed, it has grown, it has spread!
— But the sharp star-points they are piercing my brow,
And the rosy home-faces grow livid and dead
In the terrible color the fire-blossoms shed —
I am reaping my harvest in now!

The horrible color — the color of flame!
The hot sun has o'erflowed from his broken urn —
O thou pitiless sky! wilt thou show me my shame?
While the cursèd gold clings to my fingers like flame —
And glitters only to burn!

SOMEBODY OLDER.

How pleasant it is that always
There's somebody older than you—
Some one to pet and caress you,
Some one to scold you too!

Some one to call you a baby,
To laugh at you when you're wise;
Some one to care when you're sorry,
To kiss the tears from your eyes.

When life has begun to be weary,
And youth to melt like the dew,
To know, like the little children,
Somebody's older than you!

The path cannot be so lonely,
For some one has trod it before;
The golden gates are the nearer,
That some one stands at the door!

— I can think of nothing sadder
Than to feel, when days are few,
There's nobody left to lean on,
Nobody older than you!

The younger ones may be tender
To the feeble steps and slow;
But they can't talk the old times over —
Alas! how should they know!

'Tis a romance to them — a wonder
You were ever a child at play;
But the dear ones waiting in Heaven
Know it is all as you say.

I know that the great All-Father
Loves us and the little ones too;
Keep only child-like hearted —
Heaven is older than you!

UNREQUITING.

I CANNOT love thee, but I hold thee dear —
Thou must not stay — I cannot bid thee go!
I am so lonely, and the end draws near —
Ah, love me still, but do not tell me so!

'Tis but a little longer — keep thy faith!
Though love's last rapture I shall never know,
I fain would trust thee even unto death;
Ah, love me still, but do not tell me so!

I am so poor I have no self to give,
And less than *all* I will not offer, no!
I die, but not for thee — fain would I live —
Ay! love me still, but do not tell me so!

Like a strange flower that blossoms in the night,
And dies at dawn, love faded long ago —
Born in a dream it perished with the light —
Lov'st thou me still? Ah, do not tell me so!

Let me imagine that thou art my friend —
No less — no more I ask for here below!
Be patient with me even to the end—
Loving me still, thou wilt not tell me so!

Those words were sweet once—never more again!
— I thought my dream had vanished, let it go!
I dreamed of joy — I woke, it turned to pain —
Ah, love me still, but never tell me so!

I cannot lose thee yet, so near to heaven!
There with diviner love all souls shall glow;
There is no marriage bond, no vows are given —
Thou'lt love me still, nor need to tell me so!

Ah! I am selfish, asking even this —
I cannot love thee, nor yet bid thee go!
To utter love is nigh love's dearest bliss —
Thou lov'st me still, and dost not tell me so!

HORACE SMITH.

HYMN TO THE FLOWERS.

DAY-STARS! that ope your eyes with morn to twinkle
From rainbow galaxies of earth's creation,
And dew-drops on her lonely altars sprinkle
As a libation!

Ye matin worshippers! who bending lowly
Before the uprisen sun — God's lidless eye —
Throw from your chalices a sweet and holy
Incense on high!

Ye bright mosaics! that with storied beauty
The floor of Nature's temple tessellate,
What numerous emblems of instructive duty
Your forms create!

'Neath cloistered boughs, each floral bell that swingeth
And tolls its perfume on the passing air,
Makes sabbath in the fields, and ever ringeth
A call to prayer.

Not to the domes where crumbling arch and column
Attest the feebleness of mortal hand,
But to that fane, most catholic and solemn,
Which God hath planned;

To that cathedral, boundless as our wonder,
Whose quenchless lamps the sun and moon supply —
Its choir, the winds and waves; its organ, thunder,
Its dome the sky.

There — as in solitude and shade I wander
Through the green aisles, or, stretched upon the sod,
Awed by the silence, reverently ponder
The ways of God —

Your voiceless lips, O flowers, are living preachers,
Each cup a pulpit, and each leaf a book,
Supplying to my fancy, numerous teachers
From loneliest nook.

Floral apostles! that in dewy splendor
"Weep without woe, and blush without a crime,"
O may I deeply learn, and ne'er surrender,
Your lore sublime!

"Thou wert not, Solomon! in all thy glory,
Arrayed," the lilies cry, "in robes like ours;
How vain your grandeur! Ah, how transitory
Are human flowers!"

In the sweet-scented pictures, Heavenly Artist!
With which thou paintest Nature's wide-spread hall,
What a delightful lesson thou impartest
Of love to all.

Not useless are ye, flowers! though made for pleasure:
Blooming o'er field and wave, by day and night,
From every source your sanction bids me treasure
Harmless delight.

Ephemeral sages! what instructors hoary
For such a world of thought could furnish scope?
Each fading calyx a *memento mori*,
Yet fount of hope.

Posthumous glories! angel-like collection!
Upraised from seed or bulb interred in earth,
Ye are to me a type of resurrection,
And second birth.

Were I, O God, in churchless lands remaining,
Far from all voice of teachers or divines,
My soul would find in flowers of thy ordaining,
Priests, sermons, shrines!

ADDRESS TO A MUMMY.

AND thou hast walked about, (how strange a story!)
In Thebes's streets three thousand years ago,
When the Memnonium was in all its glory,
And Time had not begun to overthrow
Those temples, palaces, and piles stupendous,
Of which the very ruins are tremendous.

Speak! for thou long enough hast acted dummy;
Thou hast a tongue — come — let us hear its tune;
Thou 'rt standing on thy legs, above ground, mummy!
Revisiting the glimpses of the moon —
Not like thin ghosts or disembodied creatures,
But with thy bones, and flesh, and limbs, and features.

Tell us — for doubtless thou canst recollect —
To whom should we assign the Sphinx's fame?
Was Cheops or Cephrenes architect
Of either Pyramid that bears his name?
Is Pompey's Pillar really a misnomer?
Had Thebes a hundred gates, as sung by Homer?

Perhaps thou wert a mason, and forbidden
By oath to tell the secret of thy trade —
Then say what secret melody was hidden
In Memnon's statue, which at sunrise played;
Perhaps thou wert a priest — if so, my struggles
Are vain, for priestcraft never owns its juggles.

Perhaps that very hand, now pinioned flat,
Has hob-a-nobbed with Pharaoh, glass to glass;
Or dropped a half-penny in Homer's hat;
Or doffed thine own, to let Queen Dido pass;

Or held, by Solomon's own invitation,
A torch at the great Temple's dedication.

I need not ask thee if that hand, when armed,
Has any Roman soldier mauled and knuckled;
For thou wert dead, and buried, and embalmed,
Ere Romulus and Remus had been suckled;
Antiquity appears to have begun
Long after thy primeval race was run.

Thou could'st develop — if that withered tongue
Might tell us what those sightless orbs have seen —
How the world looked when it was fresh and young,
And the great Deluge still had left it green;
Or was it then so old that history's pages
Contained no record of its early ages?

Still silent, incommunicative elf!
Art sworn to secrecy? then keep thy vows;
But prythee tell us something of thyself —
Reveal the secrets of thy prison-house;
Since in the world of spirits thou hast slumbered —
What hast thou seen — what strange adventures numbered?

Since first thy form was in this box extended
We have above ground, seen some strange mutations;
The Roman empire has begun and ended —
New worlds have risen — we have lost old nations;
And countless kings have into dust been humbled,
While not a fragment of thy flesh has crumbled.

Didst thou not hear the pother o'er thy head,
When the great Persian conqueror, Cambyses,
Marched armies o'er thy tomb with thundering tread —
O'erthrew Osiris, Orus, Apis, Isis;
And shook the Pyramids with fear and wonder,
When the gigantic Memnon fell asunder?

If the tomb's secrets may not be confessed,
The nature of thy private life unfold:
A heart has throbbed beneath that leathern breast,
And tears adown that dusky cheek have rolled;
Have children climbed those knees and kissed that face;
What was thy name and station, age and race?

Statue of flesh! Immortal of the dead!
Imperishable type of evanescence!
Posthumous man, who quit'st thy narrow bed,
And standest undecayed within our presence!
Thou wilt hear nothing till the Judgment morning,
When the great trump shall thrill thee with its warning.

Why should this worthless tegument endure,
If its undying guest be lost forever?
Oh! let us keep the soul embalmed and pure
In living virtue — that when both must sever,
Although corruption may our frame consume,
The immortal spirit in the skies may bloom!

MAY RILEY SMITH.

IF.

If, sitting with this little worn-out shoe
And scarlet stocking lying on my knee,
I knew his little feet had pattered through
The pearl-set gates that lie 'twixt heaven and me,
I should be reconciled and happy too,
And look with glad eyes toward the jasper sea.

If, in the morning, when the song of birds,
Reminds me of lost music far more sweet,
I listened for his pretty broken words,
And for the music of his dimpled feet,
I could be almost happy, though I heard
No answer, and I saw his vacant seat.

could be glad if, when the day is done,
And all its cares and heart-aches laid away,
I could look westward to the hidden sun,
And, with a heart full of sweet yearnings, say —
"To-night I'm nearer to my little one
By just the travel of a single day."

. . . . .

If he were dead, I should not sit to-day
And stain with tears the wee sock on my knee;
I should not kiss the tiny shoe and say,
"Bring back again my little boy to me!"
I should be patient, knowing it was God's way,
And wait to meet him o'er death's silent sea.

But oh! to know the feet, once pure and white,
The haunts of vice have boldly ventured in!
The hands that should have battled for the right
Have been wrung crimson in the clasp of sin!
And should he knock at Heaven's gate to-night,
I fear my boy could hardly enter in

SOMETIME.

Sometime, when all life's lessons have been learned,
And sun and stars forevermore have set,
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash before us out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans are right,
And how what seemed reproof was love most true.

And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,
God's plans go on as best for you and me;
How, when we called, He heeded not our cry,
Because His wisdom to the end could see.
And e'en as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God, perhaps, is keeping from us now
Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.

And if, sometimes, commingled with life's wine,
We find the wormwood, and rebel and shrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine
Pours out the potion for our lips to drink;

And if some friend we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
Oh, do not blame the loving Father so,
But wear your sorrow with obedient grace!

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends His friend,
And that, sometimes, the sable pall of death
Conceals the fairest boon His love can send.
If we could push ajar the gates of life,
And stand within and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife
And for each mystery could find a key.

But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart;
God's plans like lilies pure and white unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.
And if, through patient toil, we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,
When we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we shall say, "God knew the best!"

CAROLINE BOWLES SOUTHEY.

LAUNCH THY BARK, MARINER.

Launch thy bark, mariner!
Christian, God speed thee;
Let loose the rudder bands,
Good angels lead thee!
Set thy sails warily,
Tempests will come;
Steer thy course steadily,
Christian, steer home!

Look to the weather bow,
Breakers are round thee;
Let fall the plummet now,
Shallows may ground thee.
Reef in the foresail, there!
Hold the helm fast!
So — let the vessel wear, —
There swept the blast.

What of the night, watchman?
What of the night?
"Cloudy, all quiet, —
No land yet, — all's right."
Be wakeful, be vigilant, —
Danger may be
At an hour when all seemeth
Securest to thee.

How! gains the leak so fast?
Clear out the hold, —
Hoist up thy merchandise,
Heave out thy gold;
There, let the ingots go; —
Now the ship rights;
Hurrah! the harbor's near, —
Lo! the red lights.

Slacken not sail yet
At inlet or island;
Straight for the beacon steer,
Straight for the high land;
Crowd all thy canvas on,
Cut through the foam; —
Christian! cast anchor now, —
Heaven is thy home!

THE PAUPER'S DEATH-BED.

Tread softly! bow the head —
In reverent silence bow!
No passing bell doth toll;
Yet an immortal soul
Is passing now.

Stranger, however great,
With lowly reverence bow!
There's one in that poor shed —
One by that paltry bed —
Greater than thou.

Beneath that beggar's roof,
Lo! Death doth keep his state!
Enter! — no crowds attend —
Enter! — no guards defend
This palace gate.

That pavement damp and cold
No smiling courtiers tread;
One silent woman stands,
Lifting with meagre hands
A dying head.

No mingling voices sound —
An infant wail alone;
A sob suppressed — again
That short deep gasp — and then
The parting groan!

O change! — O wondrous change!
Burst are the prison bars!
This moment there, so low,
So agonized — and now
Beyond the stars!

O change! — stupendous change!
There lies the soulless clod!
The sun eternal breaks;
The new immortal wakes —
Wakes with his God.

I NEVER CAST A FLOWER AWAY.

I NEVER cast a flower away,
The gift of one who cared for me —
A little flower — a faded flower —
But it was done reluctantly.

I never looked a last adieu
To things familiar, but my heart
Shrank with a feeling almost pain
Even from their lifelessness to part.

I never spoke the word "Farewell,"
But with an utterance faint and broken;
An earth-sick longing for the time
When it shall nevermore be spoken,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

[*From Thalaba.*]

NATURE'S QUESTION AND FAITH'S ANSWER.

ALAS! the setting sun
Saw Zeinab in her bliss,
Hodeirah's wife beloved.
Alas! the wife beloved.
The fruitful mother late,
Whom when the daughters of Arabia named,
They wished their lot like hers,—
She wanders o'er the desert sands
A wretched widow now;
The fruitful mother of so fair a race,
With only one preserved.
She wanders o'er the wilderness.

No tear relieved the burden of her heart;
Stunned with the heavy woe, she felt like one.
Half-wakened from a midnight dream of blood.
But sometimes, when the boy
Would wet her hand with tears,
And, looking up to her fixed countenance,
Sob out the name of mother! then she groaned.
At length collecting, Zeinab turned her eyes
To heaven, and praised the Lord:
"He gave, he takes away!"
The pious sufferer cried;
"The Lord our God is good!"

"Good, is he?" quoth the boy:
"Why are my brethren and my sisters slain?
Why is my father killed?
Did ever we neglect our prayers,
Or ever lift a hand unclean to Heaven?
Did ever stranger from our tent
Unwelcomed turn away?
Mother, He is not good!"

Then Zeinab beat her breast in agony, —
"O God, forgive the child!

He knows not what he says;
Thou know'st I did not teach him thoughts like these;
O Prophet, pardon him!"

She had not wept till that assuaging prayer;
The fountains of her grief were opened then,
And tears relieved her heart.
She raised her swimming eyes to heaven, —
"Allah! thy will be done!
Beneath the dispensations of that will
I groan, but murmur not.
A day will come when all things that are dark
Will be made clear: then shall I know, O Lord!
Why, in thy mercy, thou hast stricken me;
Then see and understand what now
My heart believes and feels."

[*From Thalaba.*]

REMEDIAL SUFFERING.

"Repine not, O my son!" the old man replied,
"That Heaven hath chastened thee, Behold this vine:
I found it a wild tree, whose wanton strength
Had swoln into irregular twigs.
And bold excrescences,
And spent itself in leaves and little rings;
So, in the flourish of its outwardness,
Wasting the sap and strength
That should have given forth fruit.
But when I pruned the plant,
Then it grew temperate in its vain expense
Of useless leaves, and knotted, as thou seest,
Into these full, clear clusters, to repay
The hand that wisely wounded it.
Repine not, O my son!
In wisdom and in mercy Heaven inflicts
Its painful remedies."

[*From Thalaba.*]

THE TWOFOLD POWER OF ALL THINGS.

All things have a double power,
Alike for good and evil. The same fire,
That on the comfortable hearth at eve
Warmed the good man, flames o'er the house at night:
Should we for this forego
The needful element?
Because the scorching summer sun
Darts fever, wouldst thou quench the orb of day?
Or deemest thou that Heaven in anger formed
Iron to till the field, because, when man
Had tipt his arrows for the chase, he rushed
A murderer to the war?

[*From Thalaba.*]

NIGHT.

How beautiful is night!
A dewy freshness fills the silent air;
No mist obscures, nor cloud nor speck nor stain
Breaks the serene of heaven;
In full-orbed glory yonder moon divine
Rolls through the dark blue depths.
Beneath her steady ray
The desert-circle spreads,
Like the round ocean, girdled with the sky,
How beautiful is night!

[*From The Curse of Kehama.*]

LOVE'S IMMORTALITY.

THEY sin who tell us love can die.
With life all other passions fly,
All others are but vanity.
In heaven, Ambition cannot dwell,
Nor Avarice in the vaults of hell;
Earthly, these passions of the earth
They perish where they had their birth.
But Love is indestructible,
Its holy flame forever burneth,
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth.
Too oft on earth a troubled guest,
At times deceived, at times oppressed,
It here is tried and purified,
Then hath in heaven its perfect rest:
It soweth here with toil and care,
But the harvest-time of Love is there.
Oh! when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrows, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight!

THE OLD MAN'S COMFORTS, AND HOW HE GAINED THEM.

YOU are old, Father William, the young man cried,
The few locks that are left you are gray:
You are hale, Father William, a hearty old man,
Now tell me the reason, I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,
I remembered that youth would fly fast,
And abused not my health and my vigor at first,
That I never might need them at last.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
And pleasures with youth pass away,
And yet you lament not the days that are gone,
Now tell me the reason, I pray.

In the days of my youth, Father William replied,
I remembered that youth could not last;
I thought of the future, whatever I did,
That I never might grieve for the past.

You are old, Father William, the young man cried,
And life must be hastening away:
You are cheerful, and love to converse upon death!
Now tell me the reason, I pray.

I am cheerful, young man, Father William replied;
Let the cause thy attention engage;
In the days of my youth I remembered my God!
And he hath not forgotten my age.

[*From Joan of Arc.*]

THE MAID OF ORLEANS GIRDING FOR BATTLE.

SCARCE had the earliest ray from Chinon's towers
Made visible the mists that curled along
The winding waves of Vienne, when from her couch
Started the martial maid. She mailed her limbs;
The white plumes nodded o'er her helméd head;
She girt the sacred falchion by her side,
And, like some youth that from his mother's arms,
For his first field impatient, breaks away,
Poising the lance went forth.
Twelve hundred men,
Rearing in ordered ranks their well-sharped spears,

Await her coming. Terrible in arms,
Before them towered Dunois, his manly face
Dark-shadowed by the helmet's iron cheeks.
The assembled court gazed on the marshalled train,
And at the gate the aged prelate stood
To pour his blessing on the chosen host.
And now a soft and solemn symphony
Was heard, and chanting high the hallowed hymn,
From the near convent came the vestal maids.
A holy banner, woven by virgin hands,
Snow-white, they bore. A mingled sentiment
Of awe, and eager ardor for the fight,
Thrilled through the troops, as he, the reverend man
Took the white standard, and with heavenward eye
Called on the God of Justice, blessing it.
The maid, her brows in reverence unhelmed,
Her dark hair floating on the morning gale,
Knelt to his prayer, and stretching forth her hand,
Received the mystic ensign. From the host
A loud and universal shout burst forth,
As rising from the ground, on her white brow
She placed the plumèd casque, and waved on high
The bannered lilies.

THE HOLLY-TREE.

O READER! hast thou ever stood to see
The holly-tree?
The eye that contemplates it well perceives
Its glossy leaves
Ordered by an intelligence so wise
As might confound the atheist's sophistries.

Below, a circling fence, its leaves are seen
Wrinkled and keen,
No grazing cattle through their prickly round
Can reach to wound;
But as they grow where nothing is to fear,
Smooth and unarmed the pointless leaves appear.

I love to view these things with curious eyes,
And moralize;
And in the wisdom of the holly-tree
Can emblems see
Wherewith perchance to make a pleasant rhyme,
Such as may profit in the after-time.

So, though abroad perchance I might appear
Harsh and austere,
To those who on my leisure would intrude
Reserved and rude;
Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be,
Like the high leaves upon the holly-tree.

And should my youth, as youth is apt, I know,
Some harshness show,
All vain asperities, I day by day
Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the holly tree.

And as when all the summer trees are seen
So bright and green
The holly leaves their fadeless hues display
Less bright than they,
But when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the holly-tree?

So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng;
So would I seem amid the young and gay
More grave than they,
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the holly-tree.

THE PAUPER'S FUNERAL.

What! and not one to heave the pious sigh?
Not one whose sorrow-swollen and aching eye
For social scenes, for life's endearments fled,
Shall drop a tear and dwell upon the dead!
Poor wretched outcast! I will weep for thee,
And sorrow for forlorn humanity.
Yes, I will weep; but not that thou art come
To the stern sabbath of the silent tomb:
For squalid want, and the black scorpion care,
Heart-withering fiends! shall never enter there.
I sorrow for the ills thy life hath known,
As through the world's long pilgrimage, alone,
Haunted by poverty, and woebegone,
Unloved, unfriended, thou didst journey on:
Thy youth in ignorance and labor past,
And thine old age all barrenness and blast.
Hard was thy fate, which, while it doomed to woe,
Denied thee wisdom to support the blow;
And robbed of all its energy thy mind,
Ere yet it cast thee on thy fellow-kind.
Abject of thought, the victim of distress,
To wander in the world's wide wilderness.
Poor outcast, sleep in peace! the wintry storm
Blows bleak no more on thy unsheltered form;
Thy woes are past; thou restest in the tomb; —
I pause, and ponder on the days to come.

WRITTEN ON SUNDAY MORNING.

Go thou and seek the house of prayer!
I to the woodlands wend, and there
In lovely nature see the God of love.
The swelling organ's peal
Wakes not my soul to zeal,
Like the wild music of the wind-swept grove.
The gorgeous altar and the mystic vest
Rouse not such ardor in my breast,
As where the noon-tide beam
Flashed from the broken stream,
Quick vibrates on the dazzled sight;
Or where the cloud-suspended rain
Sweeps in shadows o'er the plain;
Or when reclining on the cliff's huge height,
I mark the billows burst in silver light.

Go thou and seek the house of prayer!
I to the woodlands shall repair,
Feed with all nature's charms mine eyes,
And hear all nature's melodies.
The primrose bank shall there dispense
Faint fragrance to the awakened sense:
The morning beams that life and joy impart,
Shall with their influence warm my heart,
And the full tear that down my cheek will steal,
Shall speak the prayer of praise I feel.

Go thou and seek the house of prayer!

I to the woodlands bend my way
And meet Religion there.
She needs not haunt the high-arched dome to pray
Where storied windows dim the doubtful day.
With Liberty she loves to rove,
Wide o'er the heathy hill or cowslipt dale;
Or seek the shelter of the embowering grove,
Or with the streamlet wind along the vale.
Sweet are these scenes to her; and when the night
Pours in the north her silver streams of light,
She woos reflection in the silent gloom,
And ponders on the world to come.

THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM.

It was a summer evening,
Old Kaspar's work was done;
And he before his cottage door
Was sitting in the sun,
And by him sported on the green
His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin
Roll something large and round,
That he beside the rivulet
In playing there, had found;
He came to ask what he had found,
That was so large, and smooth, and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,
Who stood expectant by;
And then the old man shook his head,
And with a natural sigh,
'Tis some poor fellow's skull, said he,
Who fell in the great victory.

I find them in the garden, for
There's many hereabout,
And often when I go to plough,
The ploughshare turns them out;
For many thousand men, said he,
Were slain in the great victory.

Now tell us what 'twas all about,
Young Peterkin he cries,
And little Wilhelmine looks up
With wonder-waiting eyes;
Now tell us all about the war,
And what they killed each other for.

It was the English, Kaspar cried,
That put the French to rout;
But what they killed each other for,
I could not well make out.
But everybody said, quoth he,
That 'twas a famous victory.

My father lived at Blenheim then,
Yon little stream hard by,
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,
And he was forced to fly;
So with his wife and child he fled,
Nor had he where to rest his head.

With fire and sword the country round
Was wasted far and wide,
And many a childing mother then,
And new-born infant, died ;
But things like that, you know, must be
At every famous victory.

They say it was a shocking sight,
After the field was won,
For many thousand bodies here
Lay rotting in the sun;
But things like that, you know, must be
After a famous victory.

Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won,
And our good Prince Eugene.
Why, 'twas a very wicked thing!
Said little Wilhelmine.
Nay — nay — my little girl, quoth he,
It was a famous victory.

And everybody praised the Duke
Who such a fight did win.
But what good came of it at last ?
Quoth little Peterkin.
Why, that I cannot tell, said he,
But 'twas a famous victory.

THE CATARACT OF LODORE.

"How does the water
Come down at Lodore!"
My little boy asked me
Thus, once on a time;
And moreover he tasked me
To tell him in rhyme.
Anon, at the word;
There first came one daughter,
And then came another,
To second and third
The request of their brother;
And to hear how the water
Comes down at Lodore,
With its rush and its roar,
As many a time
They had seen it before.
So I told them in rhyme,
For of rhymes I had store;
And 'twas in my vocation
For their recreation
That so I should sing;
Because I was laureate
To them and the king.

From its sources which well
In the tarn on the fell;
From its fountains
In the mountains,
Its rills and its gills;
Through moss and through brake,
It runs and it creeps
For a while, till it sleeps
In its own little lake,
And thence at departing,
Awakening and starting,
It runs through the reeds,
And away it proceeds,
Through meadow and glade,
In sun and in shade,
And through the wood-shelter,
Among crags in its flurry,
Helter-skelter,
Hurry-skurry,
Here it comes sparkling,
And there it lies darkling;
Now smoking and frothing
Its tumult and wrath in,
Till, in this rapid race
On which it is bent,
It reaches the place
Of its steep descent.
The cataract strong
Then plunges along,
Striking and raging
As if a war waging
Its caverns and rocks among;
Rising and leaping,
Sinking and creeping,
Swelling and sweeping,
Showering and springing,
Flying and flinging,
Writhing and ringing,
Eddying and whisking,
Spouting and frisking,
Turning and twisting,
Around and around
With endless rebound:
Smiting and fighting
A sight to delight in;
Confounding, astounding,
Dizzying and deafening the ear with its sound.

Collecting, projecting,
Receding and speeding,
And shocking and rocking,
And darting and parting,
And threading and spreading,
And whizzing and hissing,
And dripping and skipping,
And hitting and splitting,
And shining and twining,
And rattling and battling,
And shaking and quaking,
And pouring and roaring,
And waving and raving,
And tossing and crossing,
And flowing and going,
And running and stunning,
And foaming and roaming,
And dinning and spinning.
And dropping and hopping,
And working and jerking,
And guggling and struggling,
And heaving and cleaving,
And moaning and groaning;
And glittering and frittering,
And gathering and feathering,
And whitening and brightening,
And quivering and shivering,
And hurrying and skurrying,
And thundering and floundering;

Dividing and gliding and sliding,
And falling and brawling and sprawling,

And driving and riving and striving,
And sprinkling and twinkling and wrinkling,
And sounding and bounding and rounding,
And bubbling and troubling and doubling,
And grumbling and rumbling and tumbling,
And clattering and battering and shattering;

Retreating and beating and meeting and sheeting,
Delaying and straying and playing and spraying,
Advancing and prancing and glancing and dancing,
Recoiling, turmoiling and toiling and boiling,
And gleaming and streaming and steaming and beaming,
And rushing and flushing and brushing and gushing,
And flapping and rapping and clapping, and slapping,
And curling and whirling and purling and twirling,
And thumping and plumping and bumping and jumping,
And dashing and flashing and splashing and clashing;
And so never ending, but always descending,
Sounds and motions forever and ever are blending
All at once, and all o'er, with a mighty uproar, —
And this way, the water comes down at Lodore.

THE EBB-TIDE.

Slowly thy flowing tide
Came in, old Avon! scarcely did mine eyes,
As watchfully I roamed thy greenwood side,
Behold the gentle rise.

With many a stroke and strong,
The laboring boatmen upward plied their oars,
And yet the eye beheld them laboring long
Between thy winding shores.

Now down thine ebbing tide
The unlabored boat falls rapidly along,
The solitary helmsman sits to guide,
And sings an idle song.

Now o'er the rocks, that lay
So silent late, the shallow current roars;
Fast flow thy waters on their seaward way
Through wider-spreading shores.

Avon! I gaze and know!
The wisdom emblemed in thy varying way,
It speaks of human joys that rise so slow,
So rapidly decay.

Kingdoms that long have stood,
And slow to strength and power attained at last,
Thus from the summit of high fortune's flood
Ebb to their ruin fast.

So tardily appears
The course of time to manhood's envied stage,
Alas! how hurryingly the ebbing years
Then hasten to old age!

TO THE FIRE.

My friendly fire, thou blazest clear and bright,
Nor smoke nor ashes soil thy grateful flame;
Thy temperate splendor cheers the gloom of night,
Thy genial heat enlivens the chilled frame.

I love to muse me o'er the evening hearth,
I love to pause in meditation's sway;
And whilst each object gives reflection birth,
Mark thy brisk rise, and see thy slow decay;
And I would wish, like thee, to shine serene,
Like thee, within mine influence, all to cheer;
And wish at last in life's declining scene,
As I had beamed as bright, to fade as clear:
So might my children ponder o'er my shrine,
And o'er my ashes muse, as I will muse o'er thine.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

CONTENT AND RICH.

MY conscience is my crown;
Contented thoughts, my rest;
My heart is happy in itself,
My bliss is in my breast.

Enough I reckon wealth;
That mean, the surest lot,
That lies too high for base contempt,
Too low for envy's shot.

My wishes are but few;
All easy to fulfil:
I make the limits of my power
The bounds unto my will.

I fear no care for gold,
Well-doing is my wealth;
My mind to me an empire is,
While grace affordeth health.

I clip high-climbing thoughts,
The wings of swelling pride;
Their fall is worst that from the height
Of greatest honor slide.

Since sails of largest size
The storm doth soonest tear,
I bear so low and small a sail
As freeth me from fear.

I wrestle not with rage
While fury's flame doth burn;
It is in vain to stop the stream
Until the tide doth turn.

But when the flame is out,
And ebbing wrath doth end,
I turn a late enragèd foe
Into a quiet friend.

And, taught with often proof,
A tempered calm I find
To be most solace to itself,
Best cure for angry mind.

Spare diet is my fare,
My clothes more fit than fine;
I know I feed and clothe a foe,
That pampered would repine.

I envy not their hap
Whom favor doth advance;
I take no pleasure in their pain
That have less happy chance.

To rise by others' fall
I deem a losing gain;
All states with others' ruin built
To ruin run amain.

No change of Fortune's calm
Can cast my comforts down:
When Fortune smiles, I smile to think
How quickly she will frown.

And when, in froward mood,
She proved an angry foe,
Small gain, I found, to let her come —
Less loss to let her go.

ROBERT WILLIAM SPENCER.

THE SPEED OF HAPPY HOURS.

Too late I stayed—forgive the crime—
Unheeded flew the hours:
How noiseless falls the foot of Time
That only treads on flowers!

And who, with clear account, remarks
The ebbings of his glass,
When all its sands are diamond sparks,
That dazzle as they pass?

Ah! who to sober measurement
Time's happy swiftness brings,
When birds of paradise have lent
Their plumage to his wings?

EDMUND SPENSER.

[*From The Epithalamium.*]

THE BRIDE BEAUTIFUL, BODY AND SOUL.

Now is my love all ready forth to come:
Let all the virgins therefore well await;
And ye, fresh boys, that tend upon her groom,
Prepare yourselves, for he is coming straight.
Set all your things in seemly good array,
Fit for so joyful day:
The joyfull'st day that ever sun did see.
Fair sun! show forth thy favorable ray,
And let thy lifeful heat not fervent be,
For fear of burning her sunshiny face.
Her beauty to disgrace.
O fairest Phœbus! father of the Muse!
If ever I did honor thee aright,
Or sing the thing that might thy mind delight,
Do not thy servant's simple boon refuse,
But let this day, let this one day be mine;
Let all the rest be thine.
Then I thy sovereign praises loud will sing,
That all the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.
Lo! where she comes along with portly pace,
Like Phœbe, from her chamber of the east,
Arising forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best.
So well it her beseems, that ye would ween
Some angel she had been.
Her long loose yellow locks; like golden wire
Sprinkled with pearl, and pearling flowers atween,
Do like a golden mantle her attire;
And being crownèd with a garland green,
Seem like some maiden queen.
Her modest eyes, abashèd to behold
So many gazers as on her do stare,
Upon the lowly ground affixèd are;
Ne dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to hear her praises sung so loud,
So far from being proud.
Nathless do ye still loud her praises sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

Tell me, ye merchants' daughters, did ye see
So fair a creature in your town before?

So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
Adorned with beauty's grace and virtue's store;
Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,
Her forehead ivory white,
Her cheeks like apples which the sun hath ruddied,
Her lips like cherries charming men to bite,
Her breast like to a bowl of cream uncrudded.
Why stand ye still, ye virgins in amaze,
Upon her so to gaze,
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing
To which the woods did answer, and your echo ring!

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lively sprite,
Garnished with heaven by gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonished like to those which read
Medusa's mazeful head.
There dwells sweet Love, and constant Chastity,
Unspotted Faith, and comely Womanhood,
Regard of Honor, and mild Modesty;
There Virtue reigns as queen in royal throne,
And giveth laws alone,
The which the base affections do obey,
And yield their services unto her will:
Ne thought of things uncomely ever may
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once seen these her celestial treasures,
And unrevealèd pleasures,
Then would ye wonder and her praises sing,
That all the woods would answer, and your echo ring.

[*From The Faerie Queene.*]

THE CAPTIVE SOUL.

What war so cruel, or what siege so sore,
As that which strong affections do apply
Against the fort of Reason evermore,
To bring the soul into captivity?
Their force is fiercer through infirmity
Of the frail flesh, relenting to their rage;
And exercise most bitter tyranny
Upon the parts brought into their bondage;
No wretchedness is like to sinful villainage.

[*From The Faerie Queene.*]

AVARICE.

And greedy Avarice by him did ride,
Upon a camel laden all with gold;
Two iron coffers hung on either side,
With precious metal full as they might hold;
And in his lap a heap of coin he told;
For of his wicked pelf his God he made,
And unto hell himself for money sold;
Accursed usury was all his trade;
And right and wrong alike in equal balance weighed.

His life was nigh unto death's door yplaced,
And threadbare coat and cobbled shoes he ware;
Ne scarce good morsel all his life did taste;
But both from back and belly still did spare,
To fill his bags, and riches to compare;
Yet child nor kinsman living had he none
To leave them to; but thorough daily care
To get, and nightly fear to lose, his own,
He led a wretched life unto himself unknown.

Most wretched wight, whom nothing might suffice,
Whose greedy lust did lack in greatest store,
Whose need had end, but no end covetize,
Whose wealth was want, whose plenty made him poor,
Who had enough, yet wishèd evermore;
A vile disease; and eke in foot and hand
A grievous gout tormented him full sore,
That well he could not touch, nor go, nor stand,
Such one was Avarice, the fourth of this fair band.

[*From The Faerie Queene.*]

UNA AND THE LION.

Nought is there under heaven's wide hollowness
That moves more dear compassion of mind
Than beauty brought t' unworthy wretchedness
Through envy's snares, or fortune's freaks unkind.
I, whether lately through her brightness blind,
Or through allegiance and fast fealty,
Which I do owe unto all womankind,
Feel my heart pierced with so great agony,
When such I see, that all for pity I could die.

And now it is impassionèd so deep,
For fairest Una's sake, of whom I sing,
That my frail eyes these lines with tears do steep,
To think how she through guileful handling,
Though true as touch, though daughter of a king,
Though fair as ever living wight was fair,
Though nor in word nor deed ill meriting,
Is from her knight divorcèd in despair,
And her due loves derived to that vile witch's share.

Yet, she most faithful lady all this while,
Forsaken, woful, solitary maid,
Far from all people's preace, as in exile,
In wilderness and wasteful deserts strayed,
To seek her knight; who, subtily betrayed
Through that late vision, which th' Enchanter wrought,
Had her abandoned. She of nought afraid,
Through woods and wasteness wide him daily sought;
Yet wishèd tidings none of him unto her brought.

One day, nigh weary of the irksome way,
From her unhasty beast she did alight,
And on the grass her dainty limbs did lay
In secret shadow, far from all men's sight;
From her fair head her fillet she undight,
And laid her stole aside. Her angel's face,
As the great eye of heaven, shinèd bright,
And made a sunshine in the shady place;
Did never mortal eye behold such heavenly grace.

It fortunèd, out of the thickest wood
A ramping lion rushèd suddenly,
Hunting full greedy after salvage blood;
Soon as the royal virgin he did spy,
With gaping mouth at her ran greedily,
To have at once devoured her tender corse:

But to the prey whenas he drew more nigh,
His bloody rage assuagèd with remorse,
And, with the sight amazed, forgot his furious force.

Instead thereof he kissed her weary feet,
And licked her lily hands with fawning tongue,
As he her wrongèd innocence did weet,
Oh, how can beauty master the most strong,
And simple truth subdue avenging wrong!
Whose yielded pride and proud submission,
Still dreading death, when she had markèd long,
Her heart 'gan melt in great compassion,
And drizzling tears did shed for pure affection.

[*From The Faerie Queene.*]

A HOSPITAL.

EFTSOONES unto an holy hospital,
That was foreby the way, she did him bring;
In which seven Bead-men, that had vowèd all
Their life to service of high heaven's king,
Did spend their days in doing godly things:
Their gates to all were open evermore,
That by the weary way were travelling;
And one sat waiting ever them before,
To call in comers by, that needy were and poor.

The first of them, that eldest was and best,
Of all the house had charge and government,
As guardian and steward of the rest:
His office was to give entertainment
And lodging unto all that came and went;
Not unto such as could him feast again,
And double quite for that he on them spent;
But such, as want of harbor did constrain:
Those for God's sake his duty was to entertain.

The second was as almoner of the place:
His office was the hungry for to feed,
And thirsty give to drink; a work of grace;
He feared not once himself to be in need,
Ne cared to hoard for those whom he did breed:
The grace of God he laid up still in store,
Which as a stock he left unto his seed;
He had enough; what need him care for more?
And had he less, yet some he would give to the poor.

The third had of their wardrobe custody,
In which were not rich tires, nor garments gay,
The plumes of pride and wings of vanity,
But clothes meet to keep keen cold away,
And naked nature seemly to array;
With which bare wretched wights he daily clad,
The images of God in earthly clay;
And if that no spare clothes to give he had,
His own coat he would cut, and it distribute glad.

The fourth appointed by his office was
Poor prisoners to relieve with gracious aid,

And captives to redeem with price of brass
From Turks and Saracens, which them had stayed;
And though they faulty were, yet well he weighed,
That God to us forgiveth every hour
Much more than that, why they in bands were laid;
And he, that harrowed hell with heavy store,
The faulty souls from thence brought to his heavenly bower.

The fifth had charge sick persons to attend,
And comfort those in point of death which lay;
For them most needeth comfort in the end,
When sin, and hell, and death, do most dismay
The feeble soul departing hence away.
All is but lost, that living we bestow,
If not well ended at our dying day.
O man, have mind of that last bitter throe;
For as the tree does fall, so lies it ever low.

[*From The Faerie Queene.*]

VICTORY FROM GOD.

WHAT man is he that boasts of fleshly might
And vain assurance of mortality?
Which, all so soon as it doth come to fight
Against spiritual foes, yields by and by,
Or from the field most cowardly doth fly;
Ne let the man ascribe it to his skill,
That thorough grace hath gainèd victory.
If any strength we have, it is to ill;
But all the good is God's, both power and ekè will.

[*From The Faerie Queene.*]

ANGELIC CARE.

AND is there care in heaven? and is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is:—else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts. But oh! th'exceeding grace
Of Highest God that loves his creatures so,
And all his works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels he sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe!

How oft do they their silver bowers leave
To come to succor us that succor want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flitting skies, like flying pursuivant,
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
And all for love and nothing for reward;
Oh, why should Heavenly God to men have such regard!

HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD.

HEREAFTER.

LOVE, when all these years are silent, vanished quite and laid to rest,
When you and I are sleeping, folded breathless breast to breast,
When no morrow is before us, and the long grass tosses o'er us,
And our grave remains forgotten, or by alien footsteps pressed, —

Still that love of ours will linger, that great love enrich the earth,
Sunshine in the heavenly azure, breezes blowing joyous mirth;
Fragrance fanning off from flowers, melody of summer showers,
Sparkle of the spicy wood-fires round the happy autumn hearth.

That's our love. But you and I, dear, — shall we linger with it yet,
Mingled in one dewdrop, tangled in one sunbeam's golden net, —
On the violet's purple bosom, I the sheen but you the blossom,
Stream on sunset winds, and be the haze with which some hill is wet?

Oh, belovèd, — if ascending, — when we have endowed the world
With the best bloom of our being, whither will our way be whirled;
Through what vast and starry spaces, toward what awful holy places,
With a white light on our faces, spirit over spirit furled?

Only this our yearning answers, — whereso'er that way defile,
Not a film shall part us through the æons of that mighty while,
In the fair eternal weather, even as phantoms still together,
Floating, floating, one forever, in the light of God's great smile!

THE NUN AND HARP.

WHAT memory fired her pallid face,
What passion stirred her blood,
What tide of sorrow and desire
Poured its forgotten flood
Upon a heart that ceased to beat,
Long since, with thought that life was sweet
When nights were rich with vernal dusk,
And the rose burst its bud?

Had not the western glory then
Stolen through the latticed room,
Her funeral raiment would have shed
A more heart-breaking gloom;
Had not a dimpled convent-maid
Hung in the doorway, half afraid,
And left the melancholy place
Bright with her blush and bloom!

Beside the gilded harp she stood,
And through the singing strings
Wound those wan hands of folded prayer
In murmurous preludings.
Then, like a voice, the harp rang high
Its melody, as climb the sky,
Melting against the melting blue,
Some bird's vibrating wings.

Ah, why, of all the songs that grow
Forever tenderer,
Chose she that passionate refrain
Where lovers 'mid the stir
Of wassailers that round them pass
Hide their sweet secret? Now alas,
In her nun's habit, coifed and veiled,
What meant that song to her!

Slowly the western ray forsook
The statue in its shrine;
A sense of tears thrilled all the air
Along the purpling line.
Earth seemed a place of graves that rang
To hollow footsteps, while she sang,
"Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine!"

OUR NEIGHBOR.*

Old neighbor, for how many a year
The same horizon, stretching here,
Has held us in its happy bound
From Rivermouth to Ipswich Sound!
How many a wave-washed day we've seen
Above that low horizon lean,
And marked within the Merrimack
The self-same sunset reddening back,
Or in the Powow's shining stream,
That silent river of a dream!

Where Craneneck o'er the woody gloom
Lifts her steep mile of apple-bloom:
Where Salisbury Sands, in yellow length
With the great breaker measures strength;
Where Artichoke in shadow slides,
The lily on her painted tides —
There's naught in the enchanted view
That does not seem a part of you;
Your legends hang on every hill,
Your songs have made it dearer still.

Yours is the river-road; and yours
Are all the mighty meadow floors
Where the long Hampton levels lie
Alone between the sea and sky.
Fresher in Follymill shall blow
The Mayflowers, that you loved them so;
Prouder Deer Island's ancient pines
Toss to their measure in your lines;
And purpler gleam old Appledore,
Because your foot has trod her shore.

Still shall the great Cape wade to meet
The storms that fawn about her feet,
The summer evening linger late
In many-rivered Stackyard Gate,
When we, when all your people here
Have fled. But like the atmosphere,
You still the region shall surround,
The spirit of the sacred ground,
Though you have risen, as mounts the star,
Into horizons vaster far!

PALMISTRY.

A little hand, a fair soft hand
Dimpled and sweet to kiss:
No sculptor ever carved from stone
A lovelier hand than this.

A hand as idle and as white
As lilies on their stems;
Dazzling with rosy finger-tips,
Dazzling with crusted gems.

Another hand, — a tired old hand,
Written with many lines;
A faithful, weary hand, whereon
The pearl of great price shines!

For folded, as the wingèd fly
Sleeps in the chrysalis,
Within this little palm I see
That lovelier hand than this!

FANTASIA.

We're all alone, we're all alone!
The moon and stars are dead and gone:
The night's at deep, the wind asleep,
And thou and I are all alone!

What care have we though life there be?
Tumult and life are not for me!
Silence and sleep about us creep;
Tumult and life are not for thee!

How late it is since such as this
Had topped the height of breathing bliss!
And now we keep an iron sleep, —
In that grave thou, and I in this!

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* J. G. Whittier.

A FOUR-O'CLOCK.

Ah, happy day, refuse to go!
Hang in the heavens forever so!
Forever in mid-afternoon,
Ah, happy day of happy June!
Pour out thy sunshine on the hill,
The piny wood with perfume fill,
And breathe across the singing sea
Land-scented breezes, that shall be
Sweet as the gardens that they pass,
Where children tumble in the grass!

Ah, happy day, refuse to go!
Hang in the heavens forever so!
And long not for thy blushing rest
In the soft bosom of the west,
But bid gray evening get her back
With all the stars upon her track!
Forget the dark, forget the dew,
The mystery of the midnight blue,
And only spread thy wide warm wings
While Summer her enchantment flings!

Ah, happy day, refuse to go!
Hang in the heavens forever so!
Forever let thy tender mist
Lie like dissolving amethyst
Deep in the distant dales, and shed
Thy mellow glory overhead!
Yet wilt thou wander, — call the thrush,
And have the wilds and waters hush
To hear his passion-broken tune,
Ah, happy day of happy June!

A SNOWDROP.

Only a tender little thing,
So velvet soft and white it is;
But March himself is not so strong,
With all the great gales that are his.

In vain his whistling storms he calls,
In vain the cohorts of his power
Ride down the sky on mighty blasts —
He cannot crush the little flower.

Its white spear parts the sod, the snows
Than that white spear less snowy are,
The rains roll off its crest like spray,
It lifts again its spotless star.

Blow, blow, dark March! To meet you here,
Thrust upward from the central gloom,
The stellar force of the old earth
Pulses to life in this slight bloom.

MY OWN SONG.

Oh, glad am I that I was born!
For who is sad when flaming morn
Bursts forth, or when the mighty night
Carries the soul from height to height!

To me, as to the child that sings,
The bird that claps his rain-washed wings,
The breeze that curls the sun-tipped flower,
Comes some new joy with each new hour.

Joy in the beauty of the earth,
Joy in the fire upon the hearth,
Joy in that potency of love
In which I live and breathe and move!

Joy even in the shapeless thought
That, some day, when all tasks are wrought,
I shall explore that vasty deep
Beyond the frozen gates of sleep.

For joy attunes all beating things,
With me each rhythmic atom sings,
From glow till gloom, from mirk till morn;
Oh, glad am I that I was born!

MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

What love do I bring you? The earth,
Full of love, were far lighter;
The great hollow sky, full of love,
Something slighter.

Earth full and heaven full were less
Than the full measure given;
Nay, say a heart full, — the heart
Holds earth and heaven!

CHARLES SPRAGUE.

ODE ON ART.

WHEN, from the sacred garden driven,
Man fled before his Maker's wrath,
An angel left her place in heaven,
And crossed the wanderer's sunless path,
'Twas Art! sweet Art! new radiance broke
Where her light foot flew o'er the ground,
And thus, with seraph voice she spoke —
"The Curse a blessing shall be found."

She led him through the trackless wild,
Where noontide sunbeam never blazed;
The thistle shrunk, the harvest smiled;
And Nature gladdened as she gazed.
Earth's thousand tribes of living things,
At Art's command, to him are given;
The village grows, the city springs,
And point their spires of faith to heaven.

He rends the oak — and bids it ride,
To guard the shores its beauty graced;
He smites the rock — upheaved in pride,
See towers of strength, and domes of taste.
Earth's teeming caves their wealth reveal,
Fire bears his banner on the wave,
He bids the mortal poison heal,
And leaps triumphant o'er the grave.

He plucks the pearls that stud the deep,
Admiring Beauty's lap to fill;
He breaks the stubborn marble's sleep,
And mocks his own Creator's skill.
With thoughts that swell his glowing soul,
He bids the ore illume the page,
And, proudly scorning Time's control,
Commerces with an unborn age.

In fields of air he writes his name,
And treads the chambers of the sky;
He reads the stars, and grasps the flame
That quivers round the Throne on high,
In war renowned, in peace sublime,
He moves in greatness and in grace;
His power, subduing space and time,
Links realm to realm and race to race.

THE WINGED WORSHIPPERS.

GAY, guiltless pair,
What seek ye from the fields of heaven?
Ye have no need of prayer,
Ye have no sins to be forgiven.

Why perch ye here,
Where mortals to their Maker bend?
Can your pure spirits fear
The God ye never could offend?

Ye never knew
The crimes for which we come to weep.
Penance is not for you,
Blessed wanderers of the upper deep.

To you, 'tis given
To wake sweet Nature's untaught lays;
Beneath the arch of heaven
To chirp away a life of praise.

Then spread each wing,
Far, far above, o'er lakes and lands,
And join the choirs that sing
In yon blue dome not reared with hands.

Or, if ye stay,
To note the consecrated hour,
Teach me the airy way,
And let me try your envied power.

Above the crowd,
On upward wings could I but fly,
I'd bathe in yon bright cloud,
And seek the stars that gem the sky.

'Twere Heaven indeed
Through fields of trackless light to soar,
On Nature's charms to feed,
And Nature's own great God adore.

THE FAMILY MEETING.

We are all here!
Father, mother,
Sister, brother,
All who hold each other dear.
Each chair is filled — we're all at home;
To-night let no cold stranger come;
It is not often thus around
Our old familiar hearth we're found.
Bless, then, the meeting and the spot;
For once be every care forgot;
Let gentle Peace assert her power,
And kind Affection rule the hour;
We're all — all here.

We're *not* all here!
Some are away — the dead ones dear,
Who thronged with us this ancient hearth,
And gave the hour to guiltless mirth.
Fate, with a stern, relentless hand,
Looked in and thinned our little band;
Some like a night-flash passed away,
And some sank, lingering, day by day;
The quiet graveyard — some lie there —
And cruel Ocean has his share —
We're *not* all here.

We *are* all here!
Even they — the dead — though dead, so dear.
Fond Memory, to her duty true,
Brings back their faded forms to view.
How life-like, through the mist o
years,
Each well-remembered face appears
We see them as in times long past;
From each to each kind looks are cast;
We hear their words, their smiles behold,
They're round us as they were o
old —
We *are* all here.

We are all here!
Father, mother,
Sister, brother,
You that I love with love so dear.
This may not long of us be said;
Soon must we join the gathered dead;
And by the hearth we now sit round
Some other circle will be found.
Oh, then, that wisdom may we know,
Which yields a life of peace below!
So, in the world to follow this,
May each repeat, in words of bliss,
We're all — all here!

TO MY CIGAR.

Yes, social friend, I love thee well,
In learned doctors' spite:
Thy clouds all other clouds dispel,
And lap me in delight.

By thee, they cry, with phizzes long,
My years are sooner passed;
Well, take my answer, right or wrong,
They're sweeter while they last.

And oft, mild friend, to me thou art,
A monitor, though still;
Thou speak'st a lesson to my heart
Beyond the preacher's skill.

Thou'rt like the man of worth, wh
gives
To goodness every day,
The odor of whose virtue lives
When he has passed away.

When, in the lonely evening hour,
Attended but by thee,
O'er history's varied page I pore,
Man's fate in thine I see.

Oft as thy snowy column grows,
Then breaks and falls away,
I trace how mighty realms thus rose,
Thus tumbled to decay.

Awhile like thee the hero burns,
And smokes and fumes around,
And then, like thee, to ashes turns.
And mingles with the ground.

Life's but a leaf adroitly rolled,
And time's the wasting breath,
That late or early, we behold,
Gives all to dusty death.

From beggar's frieze to monarch's robe,
One common doom is passed;
Sweet Nature's works, the swelling globe,
Must all burn out at last.

And what is he who smokes thee now? —
A little moving heap,
That soon like thee to fate must bow,
With thee in dust must sleep.

But though thy ashes downward go,
Thy essence rolls on high;
Thus, when my body must lie low,
My soul shall cleave the sky.

FROM THE "ODE ON SHAKESPEARE."

Who now shall grace the glowing throne,
Where, all unrivalled, all alone,
Bold Shakespeare sat, and looked creation through,
The minstrel monarch of the worlds he drew?

That throne is cold — that lyre in death unstrung
On whose proud note delighted Wonder hung.
Yet old Oblivion, as in wrath he sweeps,
One spot shall spare—the grave where Shakespeare sleeps.
Rulers and ruled in common gloom may lie,
But Nature's laureate bards shall never die.
Art's chiselled boast and Glory's trophied shore
Must live in numbers, or can live no more.
While sculptured Jove some nameless waste may claim,
Still rolls the Olympic car in Pindar's fame;
Troy's doubtful walls in ashes passed away,
Yet frown on Greece in Homer's deathless lay;
Rome, slowly sinking in her crumbling fanes,
Stands all immortal in her Maro's strains;
So, too, yon giant empress of the isles,
On whose broad sway the sun forever smiles,
To Time's unsparing rage one day must bend,
And all her triumphs in her Shakespeare end!

O thou! to whose creative power
We dedicate the festal hour,
While Grace and Goodness round the altar stand,
Learning's anointed train, and Beauty's rose-lipped band —
Realms yet unborn, in accents now unknown,
Thy song shall learn, and bless it for their own.
Deep in the West as Independence roves,
His banners planting round the land he loves,
Where Nature sleeps in Eden's infant grace,
In Time's full hour shall spring a glorious race,
Thy name, thy verse, thy language, shall they bear,
And deck for thee the vaulted temple there.
Our Roman-hearted fathers broke
Thy parent empire's galling yoke;
But thou, harmonious master of the mind,
Around their sons a gentler chain shalt bind;
Once more in thee shall Albion's sceptre wave,
And what her monarch lost, her monarch-bard shall save.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

THE TEST.

Seven women loved him. When the wrinkled pall
Enwrapt him from their unfulfilled desire
(Death, pale, triumphant rival, conquering all,)

They came, for that last look, around his pyre.
One strewed white roses, on whose leaves were hung
Her tears, like dew; and in discreet attire

Warbled her tuneful sorrow. Next among
The group, a fair-haired virgin moved serenely,
Whose saintly heart no vain repinings wrung,

Reached the calm dust, and there, composed and queenly,
Gazed, but the missal trembled in her hand:
"That's with the past," she said, "nor may I meanly

Give way to tears!" and passed into the land.
The third hung feebly on the portals moaning,
With whitened lips, and feet that stood in sand,

So weak they seemed, — and all her passion owning.
The fourth, a ripe, luxurious maiden, came,
Half for such homage to the dead atoning

By smiles on one who fanned a later flame
In her slight soul, her fickle steps attended.
The fifth and sixth were sisters; at the same

Wild moment both above the image bended,
And with immortal hatred each on each.
Glared, and therewith her exultation blended,

To know the dead had 'scaped the other's reach!
Meanwhile, through all the words of anguish spoken,
One lowly form had given no sound of speech,

Through all the signs of woe, no sign nor token:
But when they came to bear him to his rest,
They found her beauty paled, — her heart was broken:

And in the Silent Land his shade confest
That she, of all the seven, loved him best.

LAURA, MY DARLING.

Laura, my darling, the roses have blushed
At the kiss of the dew, and our chamber is hushed;
Our murmuring babe to your bosom has clung,
And hears in his slumber the song that you sung;
I watch you asleep with your arms round him thrown,
Your links of dark tresses wound in with his own,
And the wife is as dear as the gentle young bride
Of the hour when you first, darling, came to my side.

Laura, my darling, our sail down the stream
Of Youth's summers and winters has been like a dream;

Years have but rounded your womanly grace,
And added their spell to the light of your face;
Your soul is the same as though part were not given
To the two, like yourself, sent to bless me from heaven, —
Dear lives, springing forth from the life of my life,
To make you more near, darling, mother, and wife!

Laura, my darling, there's hazel-eyed Fred,
Asleep in his own tiny cot by the bed,
And little King Arthur, whose curls have the art
Of winding their tendrils so close round my heart;
Yet fairer than either, and dearer than both,
Is the true one who gave me in girlhood her troth:
For we, when we mated for evil and good, —
What were we, darling, but babes in the wood?

Laura, my darling, the years which have flown
Brought few of the prizes I pledged to my own.
I said that no sorrow should roughen her way,
Her life should be cloudless, a long summer's day.
Shadow and sunshine, thistles and flowers,
Which of the two, darling, most have been ours?
Yet to-night, by the smile on your lips, I can see
You are dreaming of me, darling, dreaming of me.

Laura, my darling, the stars that we knew
In our youth, are still shining as tender and true;
The midnight is sounding its slumberous bell,
And I come to the one who has loved me so well,
Wake, darling, wake, for my vigil is done:
What shall dissever our lives which are one?
Say, while the rose listens under her breath,
"Naught until death, darling, naught until death!"

THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY.

Could we but know
The land that ends our dark, uncertain travel,
Where lie those happier hills and meadows low, —
Ah, if beyond the spirit's inmost cavil,
Aught of that country could we surely know,
Who would not go?

Might we but hear
The hovering angels' high imagined chorus,
Or catch, betimes, with wakeful eyes and clear,
One radiant vista of the realm before us,—
With one rapt moment given to see and hear,
Ah, who would fear?

Were we quite sure
To find the peerless friend who left us lonely,
Or there, by some celestial stream as pure,
To gaze in eyes that here were lovelit only—
This weary mortal coil, were we quite sure,
Who would endure?

THE TRYST.

Sleeping, I dreamed that thou wast mine,
In some ambrosial lover's shrine.
My lips against thy lips were pressed,
And all our passion was confessed;
So near and dear my darling seemed,
I knew not that I only dreamed.

Waking this mid and moonlit night,
I clasp thee close by lover's right.
Thou fearest not my warm embrace,
And yet, so like the dream thy face
And kisses, I but half partake
The joy, and know not if I wake.

TOO LATE.

Crouch no more by the ivied walls,
Weep no longer over her grave,
Strew no flowers when evening falls;
Idly you lost what angels gave!

Sunbeams cover that silent mound
With a warmer hue than your roses red;
To-morrow's rain will bedew the ground
With a purer stream than the tears you shed.

But neither the sweets of the scattered flowers,
Nor the morning sunlight's soft command,
Nor all the songs of the summer showers,
Can charm her back from that distant land.

Tenderest vows are ever too late!
She, who has gone, can only know
The cruel sorrow that was her fate,
And the words that were a mortal woe.

Earth to earth, and a vain despair;
For the gentle spirit has flown away,
And you can never her wrongs repair,
Till ye meet again at the Judgment Day.

THE DOORSTEP.

The conference-meeting through at last,
We boys around the vestry waited
To see the girls come tripping past
Like snow-birds willing to be mated.

Not braver he that leaps the wall
By level musket-flashes litten,
Than I, who stepped before them all
Who longed to see me get the mitten.

But no, she blushed and took my arm!
We let the old folks have the highway,
And started toward the Maple Farm
Along a kind of lovers' by-way.

I can't remember what we said,
'Twas nothing worth a song or story;
Yet that rude path by which we sped
Seemed all transformed and in a glory.

The snow was crisp beneath our feet,
The moon was full, the fields were gleaming:
By hood and tippet sheltered sweet,
Her face with youth and health were beaming.

The little hand outside her muff, —
O sculptor, if you could but mould it! —
So lightly touched my jacket-cuff,
To keep it warm I had to hold it.

To have her with me there alone, —
'Twas love and fear and triumph blended.
At last we reached the foot-worn stone
Where that delicious journey ended.

The old folks, too, were almost home;
Her dimpled hand the latches fingered,
We heard the voices nearer come,
Yet on the doorstep still we lingered.

She shook her ringlets from her head,
And with a "Thank you, Ned," dissembled,
But yet I knew she understood
With what a daring wish I trembled.

A cloud passed kindly overhead,
The moon was slyly peeping through it,
Yet hid its face, as if it said,
"Come, now or never! do it! *do it!*"

My lips till then had only known
The kiss of mother and of sister,
But somehow, full upon her own
Sweet, rosy, darling mouth, — I kissed her!

Perhaps 'twas boyish love, yet still,
O listless woman, weary lover!
To feel once more that fresh, wild thrill
I'd give — but who can live youth over?

THE DISCOVERER.

I HAVE a little kinsman
Whose earthly summers are but three,
And yet a voyager is he
Greater than Drake or Frobisher,
Than all their peers together!
He is a brave discoverer,
And, far beyond the tether
Of them who seek the frozen Pole,
Has sailed where the noiseless surges roll,
Ay, he has travelled whither
A wingèd pilot steered his bark
Through the portals of the dark,
Past hoary Mimir's well and tree,
Across the unknown sea.

Suddenly, in his fair young hour,
Came one who bore a flower,
And laid it in his dimpled hand
With this command:
"Henceforth thou art a rover!
Thou must make a voyage far,
Sail beneath the evening star,
And a wondrous land discover."
— With his sweet smile innocent
Our little kinsman went.

Since that time no word
From the absent has been heard.
Who can tell
How he fares, or answer well
What the little one has found
Since he left us, outward bound;
Would that he might return!
Then should we learn
From the pricking of his chart
How the skyey roadways part.
Hush! does not the baby this way bring,
To lay beside this severed curl,
Some starry offering
Of chrysolite or pearl?

Ah, no! not so!
We may follow on his track,
But he comes not back,
And yet I dare aver
He is a brave discoverer
Of climes his elders do not know,
He has more learning than appears
On the scroll of twice three thousand years,
More than in the groves is taught,
Or from furthest Indies brought;
He knows, perchance, how spirits fare, —
What shapes the angels wear,
What is their guise and speech
In those lands beyond our reach —
And his eyes behold
Things that shall never, never be to mortal hearers told.

SEEKING THE MAYFLOWER.

THE sweetest sound our whole year round —
'Tis the first robin of the spring!
The song of the full orchard choir
Is not so fine a thing.

Glad sights are common: Nature draws
Her random pictures through the year,
But oft her music bids us long
Remember those most dear.

To me, when in the sudden spring
I hear the earliest robin's lay,
With the first trill there comes again
One picture of the May.

The veil is parted wide, and lo,
A moment, though my eyelids close,

Once more I see that wooded hill
Where the arbutus grows.

I see the village dryad kneel,
Trailing her slender fingers through
The knotted tendrils, as she lifts
Their pink, pale flowers to view.

Once more I dare to stoop beside
The dove-eyed beauty of my choice,
And long to touch her careless hair,
And think how dear her voice.

My eager, wandering hands assist
With fragrant blooms her lap to fill,
And half by chance they meet her own,
Half by our young hearts' will.

Till, at the last, those blossoms won,—
Like her, so pure, so sweet, so shy,—
Upon the gray and lichened rocks
Close at her feet I lie.

Fresh blows the breeze through hemlock-trees,
The fields are edged with green below;
And naught but youth and hope and love
We know or care to know!

Hark! from the moss-clung apple-bough,
Beyond the tumbled wall, there broke
That gurgling music of the May, —
'Twas the first robin spoke!

I heard it, ay, and heard it not, —
For little then my glad heart wist
What toil and time should come to pass,
And what delight be missed;

Nor thought thereafter, year by year,
Hearing that fresh yet olden song,
To yearn for unreturning joys
That with its joy belong.

ALL IN A LIFETIME.

THOU shalt have sun and shower from heaven above,
Thou shalt have flower and thorn from earth below,
Thine shall be foe to hate and friend to love,
Pleasures that others gain, the ills they know, —
And all in a lifetime.

Hast thou a golden day, a starlit night,
Mirth, and music, and love without alloy?
Leave no drop undrunken of thy delight:
Sorrow and shadow follow on thy joy.
'Tis all in a lifetime.

What if the battle end and thou hast lost?
Others have lost the battles thou hast won:
Haste thee, bind thy wounds, nor count the cost;
Over the field will rise to-morrow's sun.
'Tis all in a lifetime.

Laugh at the braggart sneer, the open scorn, —
'Ware of the secret stab, the slanderous lie:
For seventy years of turmoil thou wast born,
Bitter and sweet are thine till these go by.
'Tis all in a lifetime.

Reckon thy voyage well, and spread the sail, —
Wind and calm and current shall warp thy way;
Compass shall set thee false, and chart shall fail;
Ever the waves shall use thee for their play.
'Tis all in a lifetime.

Thousands of years agone were chance and change,
Thousands of ages hence the same shall be;
Naught of thy joy and grief is new or strange:
Gather apace the good that falls to thee!
'Tis all in a lifetime!

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.

THE FLIGHT OF YOUTH.

THERE are gains for all our losses,
There are balms for all our pain:
But when youth, the dream, departs,
It takes something from our hearts,
And it never comes again.

We are stronger, and are better,
Under manhood's sterner reign:
Still we feel that something sweet
Followed youth, with flying feet,
And will never come again.

Something beautiful is vanished,
And we sigh for it in vain:
We behold it everywhere,
On the earth, and in the air,
But it never comes again.

AN OLD SONG REVERSED.

"THERE are gains for all our losses."
So I said when I was young.
If I sang that song again,
'Twould not be with that refrain,
Which but suits an idle tongue.

Youth has gone, and hope gone with it,
Gone the strong desire for fame.
Laurels are not for the old.
Take them, lads. Give Senex gold.
What's an everlasting name?

When my life was in its summer
One fair woman liked my looks:
Now that Time has driven his plough
In deep furrows on my brow,
I'm no more in her good books.

"There are gains for all our losses?"
Grave beside the wintry sea,
Where my child is, and my heart,
For they would not live apart,
What has been your gain to me?

No, the words I sang were idle,
And will ever so remain:
Death, and age, and vanished youth,
All declare this bitter truth,
"There's a loss for every gain!"

AT LAST.

WHEN first the bride and bridegroom wed,
They love their single selves the best;
A sword is in the marriage-bed.
Their separate slumbers are not rest;
They quarrel, and make up again,
They give and suffer worlds of pain.
Both right and wrong,
They struggle long,
Till some good day, when they are old,
Some dark day, when the bells are tolled,
Death having taken their best of life,
They lose themselves, and find each other;
They know that they are husband, wife,
For, weeping, they are father, mother!

THE TWO BRIDES.

I SAW two maids at the kirk,
And both were fair and sweet:
One in her wedding-robe,
And one in her winding-sheet.

The choristers sang the hymn,
The sacred rites were read,
And one for life to life,
And one to death was wed.

They were borne to their bridal-beds,
In loveliness and bloom;
One in a merry castle,
And one in a solemn tomb.

One on the morrow woke
In a world of sin and pain;
But the other was happier far,
And never awoke again.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

THIS man whose homely face you look upon,
Was one of nature's masterful, great men;

Born with strong arms, that unfought battles won;
Direct of speech, and cunning with the pen.
Chosen for large designs, he had the art
Of winning with his humor, and he went
Straight to his mark, which was the human heart;
Wise, too, for what he could not break he bent.
Upon his back a more than Atlas-load,
The burden of the Commonwealth, was laid;
He stooped, and rose up to it, though the road
Shot suddenly downwards, not a whit dismayed.
  Hold, warriors, councillors, kings! All now give place
  To this dear benefactor of the race.

HOW ARE SONGS BEGOT AND BRED.

How are songs begot and bred?
How do golden measures flow?
From the heart, or from the head,
Happy poet, let me know.

Tell me first how folded flowers
Bud and bloom in vernal bowers;
How the south wind shapes its tune,
The harper, he, of June.

None may answer, none may know,
Winds and flowers come and go,
And the selfsame canons bind
Nature and the poet's mind.

RATTLE THE WINDOW.

RATTLE the window, winds,
  Rain, drip on the panes;
There are tears and sighs in our hearts and eyes,
  And a weary weight on our brains.

The gray sea heaves and heaves,
  On the dreary flats of sand;
And the blasted limb of the churchyard yew,—
  It shakes like a ghostly hand.

The dead are engulfed beneath it,
  Sunk in the grassy waves:
But we have more dead in our hearts to-day
  Than earth in all her graves!

SONGS UNSUNG.

LET no poet, great or small,
  Say that he will sing a song;
For song cometh, if at all,
  Not because we woo it long,
But because it suits its will,
Tired at last of being still.

Every song that has been sung
  Was before it took a voice,
Waiting since the world was young
  For the poet of its choice.
Oh, if any waiting be,
May they come to-day to me!

I am ready to repeat
  Whatsoever they impart;
Sorrows sent by them are sweet,
  They know how to heal the heart
Ay, and in the lightest strain
Something serious doth remain.

What are my white hairs, forsooth,
  And the wrinkles on my brow?
I have still the soul of youth,
  Try me, merry Muses, now.
I can still with numbers fleet
Fill the world with dancing feet.

No, I am no longer young,
  Old am I this many a year;
But my songs will yet be sung,
  Though I shall not live to hear.
O my son that is to be,
Sing my songs, and think of me!

WHEN THE DRUM OF SICKNESS BEATS.

WHEN the drum of sickness beats
  The change o' the watch, and we are old,
Farewell, youth, and all its sweets,
  Fires gone out that leave us cold!

Hairs are white that once were black,
  Each of fate the message saith;
And the bending of the back
  Salutation is to death.

PAIN AND PLEASURE.

Pain and pleasure both decay,
  Wealth and poverty depart;
Wisdom makes a longer stay,
  Therefore, be thou wise, my heart.

Land remains not, nor do they
  Who the lands to-day control.
Kings and princes pass away,
  Therefore, be thou fixed, my soul.

If by hatred, love, or pride
  Thou art shaken, thou art wrong;
Only one thing will abide,
  Only goodness can be strong.

OUT OF THE DEEPS OF HEAVEN.

Out of the deeps of heaven
  A bird has flown to my door,
As twice in the ripening summers
  Its mates have flown before.

Why it has flown to my dwelling
  Nor it nor I may know;
And only the silent angels
  Can tell when it shall go.

That it will not straightway vanish,
  But fold its wings with me,
And sing in the greenest branches
  Till the axe is laid to the tree,

Is the prayer of my love and terror;
  For my soul is sore distrest,
Lest I wake some dreadful morning,
  And find but its empty nest!

WE SAT BY THE CHEERLESS FIRESIDE.

We sat by the cheerless fireside,
  Mother, and you, and I;
All thinking of our darling,
  And sad enough to die.

He lay in his little coffin,
  In the room adjoining ours,
A Christmas wreath on his bosom,
  His brow in a band of flowers.

"We bury the boy to-morrow,"
  I said, or seemed to say;
"Would I could keep it from coming
  By lengthening out to-day!

"Why can't I sit by the fireside,
  As I am sitting now,
And feel my gray hairs thinning,
  And the wrinkles on my brow?

"God keep him there in his coffin
  Till the years have rolled away!
If he *must* be buried to-morrow,
  Oh, let me die to-day!"

THE HEALTH.

You may drink to your leman in gold,
  In a great golden goblet of wine;
She's as ripe as the wine, and as bold
As the glare of the gold:
  But this little lady of mine,
  I will not profane her in wine.
I go where the garden so still is,
  (The moon raining through,)
To pluck the white bowls of the lilies,
  And drink her in dew!

SILENT SONGS.

If I could ever sing the songs
  Within me day and night,
The only fit accompaniment
  Would be a lute of light.

A thousand dreamy melodies,
  Begot with pleasant pain,
Like incantations float around
  The chambers of my brain.

But when I strive to utter one,
  It mocks my feeble art,
And leaves me silent, with the thorns
  Of music in my heart!

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY.

THE VIOLET.

O FAINT, delicious, spring-time violet,
Thine odor, like a key,
Turns noiselessly in memory's wards to let
A thought of sorrow free.

The breath of distant fields upon my brow
Blows through that open door
The sound of wind-borne bells, more sweet and low,
And sadder than of yore.

It comes afar, from that belovèd place,
And that belovèd hour,
When life hung ripening in love's golden grace,
Like grapes above a bower.

A spring goes singing through its reedy grass;
The lark sings o'er my head,
Drowned in the sky.—Oh, pass, ye visions, pass!
I would that I were dead!

Why hast thou opened that forbidden door
From which I ever flee?
O vanished Joy! O Love, that art no more,
Let my vexed spirit be!

O violet! thy odor through my brain
Hath searched, and stung to grief
This sunny day, as if a curse did stain
Thy velvet leaf.

THE UNEXPRESSED.

STRIVE not to say the whole! the poet in his art,
Must intimate the whole, and say the smallest part.

The young moon's silver arc, her perfect circle tells,
The limitless, within Art's bounded outline dwells.

Of every noble work, the silent part is best;
Of all expression, that which cannot be expressed.

Each act contains the life, each work of art, the world,
And all the planet-laws are in each dewdrop pearled.

WETMORE COTTAGE, NAHANT.

THE hours on the old piazza
That overhangs the sea,
With a tender and pensive music
At times steal over me;
And again, o'er the balcony leaning,
We list to the surf on the beach,
That fills with its solemn warning
The intervals of speech.

We three sit at night in the moonlight,
As we sat in the summer gone,
And we talk of art and nature
And sing as we sit alone;
We sing the old songs of Sorrento,
Where oranges hang o'er the sea,
And our hearts are tender with dreaming
Of days that no more shall be.

How gaily the hours went with us
In those old days that are gone!
Ah! would we were all together,
Where now I am standing alone.
Could life be again so perfect?
Ah, never! these years so drain
The heart of its freshness of feeling,—
But I long, though the longing be vain.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

LIFE'S MYSTERY.

Life's mystery, — deep, restless as the ocean,—
Hath surged and wailed for ages to and fro;
Earth's generations watch its ceaseless motion
As in and out its hollow moanings flow;
Shivering and yearning by that unknown sea,
Let my soul calm itself, O Christ, in thee!

Life's sorrows, with inexorable power,
Sweep desolation o'er this mortal plain;
And human loves and hopes fly as the chaff
Borne by the whirlwind from the ripened grain: —
Ah, when before that blast my hopes all flee,
Let my soul calm itself, O Christ, in thee!

Between the mysteries of death and life
Thou standest, loving, guiding,— not explaining;
We ask, and thou art silent,—yet we gaze,
And our charmed hearts forget their drear complaining!
No crushing fate,—no stony destiny!
Thou Lamb that hast been slain, we rest in thee!

The many waves of thought, the mighty tides,
The ground-swell that rolls up from other lands,
From far-off worlds, from dim eternal shores
Whose echo dashes on life's wave-worn strands,—
This vague, dark tumult of the inner sea
Grows calm, grows bright, O, risen Lord, in thee!

Thy piercèd hand guides the mysterious wheels;
Thy thorn-crowned brow now wears the crown of power;
And when the dark enigma presseth sore
Thy patient voice saith, "Watch with me one hour!"
As sinks the moaning river in the sea
In silver peace,— so sinks my soul in Thee!

THE OTHER WORLD.

It lies around us like a cloud.—
A world we do not see;
Yet the sweet closing of an eye
May bring us there to be.

Its gentle breezes fan our cheek;
Amid our worldly cares
Its gentle voices whisper love,
And mingle with our prayers.

Sweet hearts around us throb and beat,
Sweet helping hands are stirred,
And palpitates the veil between
With breathings almost heard.

The silence, — awful, sweet, and calm,
They have no power to break;
For mortal words are not for them
To utter or partake.

So thin, so soft, so sweet they glide,
So near to press they seem,—
They seem to lull us to our rest,
And melt into our dream.

And in the hush of rest they bring,
'Tis easy now to see
How lovely and how sweet a pass
The hour of death may be.

To close the eye, and close the ear,
Wrapped in a trance of bliss,
And gently dream in loving arms,
To swoon to that,—from this.

Scarce knowing if we wake or sleep,
Scarce asking where we are,
To feel all evil sink away,
All sorrow and all care.

Sweet souls around us! watch us still,
Press nearer to our side,
Into our thoughts, into our prayers,
With gentle helpings glide.

Let death between us be as naught,
A dried and vanished stream;
Your joy be the reality,
Our suffering life, the dream.

ALFRED BILLINGS STREET.

[*From Frontenac.*]

QUEBEC AT SUNRISE.

The fresh May morning's earliest light,
From where the richest hues were blended,
Lit on Cape Diamond's towering height
Whose spangled crystals glittered bright,
Thence to the castle roof descended,
And bathed in radiance pure and deep
The spires and dwellings of the steep.
Still downward crept the strengthening rays;
The lofty crowded roofs below
And Cataraqui caught the glow,
Till the whole scene was in a blaze.
The scattered bastions,—walls of stone
With bristling lines of cannon crowned,
Whose muzzles o'er the landscape frowned
Blackly through their embrasures—shone.
Point Levi's woods sent many a wreath
Of mist, as though hearths smoked beneath,
Whilst heavy folds of vapor gray
Upon St. Charles, still brooding, lay;
The basin glowed in splendid dyes
Glassing the glories of the skies,
And chequered tints of light and shade
The banks of Orleans' Isle displayed.

[*From Frontenac.*]

QUEBEC AT SUNSET.

'Twas in June's bright and glowing prime
The loveliest of the summer time.
The laurels were one splendid sheet
Of crowded blossom everywhere;
The locust's clustered pearl was sweet,
And the tall whitewood made the air
Delicious with the fragrance shed
From the gold flowers all o'er it spread.

In the rich pomp of dying day
Quebec, the rock-throned monarch, glowed,
Castle and spire and dwelling gray
The batteries rude that niched their way
Along the cliff, beneath the play
Of the deep yellow light, were gay,
And the curved flood, below that lay,
In flashing glory flowed;
Beyond, the sweet and mellow smile
Beamed upon Orleans' lovely isle;
Until the downward view
Was closed by mountain-tops that, reared
Against the burnished sky, appeared
In misty dreamy hue.

West of Quebec's embankments rose
The forests in their wild repose.
Between the trunks, the radiance slim
Here came with slant and quivering blaze;

Whilst there, in leaf-wreathed arbors dim,
Was gathering gray the twilight's haze.
Where cut the boughs the background glow
That striped the west, a glittering belt,
The leaves transparent seemed, as though
In the rich radiance they would melt.

Upon a narrow grassy glade,
Where thickets stood in grouping shade,
The light streaked down in golden mist,
Kindled the shrubs, the greensward kissed,
Until the clover-blossoms white
Flashed out like spangles large and bright.

This green and sun-streaked glade was rife
With sights and sounds of forest life.
A robin in a bush was singing,
A flicker rattled on a tree;
In liquid fife-like tones round ringing
A thrasher piped its melody;
Crouching and leaping with pointed ear
From thicket to thicket a rabbit sped,
And on the short delicate grass a deer
Lashing the insects from off him, fed.

[*From Frontenac.*]

THE CANADIAN SPRING.

'TWAS May! the spring with magic bloom
Leaped up from winter's frozen tomb.
Day lit the river's icy mail;
The bland warm rain at evening sank;
Ice fragments dashed in midnight's gale;
The moose at morn the ripples drank.
The yacht, that stood with naked mast
In the locked shallows motionless
When sunset fell, went curtseying past
As breathed the morning's light caress.
The woodman, in the forest deep,
At sunrise heard with gladdening thrill,
Where yester-eve was gloomy sleep.
The brown rossignol's carol shrill;
Where yester-eve the snowbank spread
The hemlock's twisted roots between,
He saw the coltsfoot's golden head
Rising from mosses plump and green;
Whilst all around were budding trees,
And mellow sweetness filled the breeze,
A few days passed along, and brought
More changes as by magic wrought.
With plumes were tipped the beechen sprays;
The birch, long dangling tassels showed;
The oak still bare, but in a blaze
Of gorgeous red the maple glowed;
With clusters of the purest white
Cherry and shadbush charmed the sight
Like spots of snow the boughs among;
And showers of strawberry blossoms made
Rich carpets in each field and glade
Where day its kindliest glances flung.
And air, too, hailed spring's joyous sway;
The bluebird warbled clear and sweet;
Then came the wren with carols gay,
The customed roof and porch to greet;
The mockbird showed its varied skill;
At evening moaned the whippoorwill.
Type of the spring from winter's gloom!

The butterfly new being found;
Whilst round the pink may-apple's bloom,
Gave myriad drinking bees their sound.
Great fleeting clouds the pigeons made;
When near her brood the hunter strayed
With trailing limp the partridge stirred;
Whilst a quick, feathered spangle shot
Rapid as thought from spot to spot
Showing the fairy humming-bird.

[*From Frontenac.*]

CAYUGA LAKE.

SWEET sylvan lake! In memory's gold
Is set the time, when first my eye
From thy green shore beheld thee hold
Thy mirror to the sunset sky!
No ripple brushed its delicate air,
Rich silken tints alone were there;
The far opposing shore displayed,
Mingling its hues, a tender shade;
A sail scarce seeming to the sight
To move, spread there its pinion white,
Like some pure spirit stealing on
Down from its realm, by beauty won.
Oh, who could view the scene nor feel
Its gentle peace within him steal,
Nor in his inmost bosom bless
Its pure and radiant loveliness?
My heart bent down its willing knee
Before the glorious Deity;
Beauty led up my heart to Him,
Beauty, though cold, and poor, and dim
Before His radiance, beauty still
That made my bosom deeply thrill;
To higher life my being wrought,
And purified my every thought,
Crept like soft music through my mind,
Each feeling of my soul refined,
And lifted me that lovely even
One precious moment up to heaven.
Then, contrast wild, I saw the cloud
The next day rear its sable crest,
And heard with awe the thunder loud
Come crashing o'er thy blackening breast.
Down swooped the eagle of the blast.
One mass of foam was tossing high,
Whilst the red lightnings, fierce and fast,
Shot from the wild and scowling sky,
And burst in dark and mighty train
A tumbling cataract, the rain.
I saw within the driving mist
Dim writhing stooping shapes,—the trees
That the last eve so softly kissed,
And birds so filled with melodies.
Still swept the wind with keener shriek,
The tossing waters higher rolled.
Still fiercer flashed the lightning's streak,
Still gloomier frowned the tempest's fold.

Ah, such, ah, such is life, I sighed.
That lovely yester-eve and this!
Now it reflects the radiant pride
Of youth and hope and promised bliss,
Earth's future track an Eden seems
Brighter than e'en our brightest dreams.
Again, the tempest rushes o'er,
The sky's blue smile is seen no more,
The placid deep to foam is tossed,
All trace of beauty, peace, is lost.
Despair is hovering, dark and wild.
Ah! what can save earth's stricken child?

Sweet sylvan lake! beside thee now,
Villages point their spires to heaven,
Rich meadows wave, broad grain-fields bow,
The axe resounds, the plough is driven:
Down verdant points come herds to drink,
Flocks strew, like spots of snow, thy brink;

The frequent farm-house meets the sight,
Mid falling harvests scythes are bright,
The watch-dog's bark comes faint from far,
Shakes on the ear the saw-mill's jar,
The steamer like a darting bird
Parts the rich emerald of thy wave,
And the gay song and laugh are heard,
But all is o'er the Indian's grave.
Pause, white man! check thy onward stride!
Cease o'er the flood thy prow to guide!
Until is given one sigh sincere
For those who once were monarchs here,
And prayer is made beseeching God
To spare us his avenging rod
For all the wrongs upon the head
Of the poor helpless savage shed;
Who, strong when we were weak, did not
Trample us down upon the spot,
But, weak when we were strong, was cast
Like leaves upon the rushing blast.

Sweet sylvan lake! one single gem
Is in thy liquid diadem.
No sister has this little isle
To give its beauty smile for smile;
With it to hear the blue-bird sing;
"Wake, leaves, wake, flowers! here comes the spring!"
With it to weave for summer's tread
Mosses below and bowers o'erhead;
With it to flash to gorgeous skies
The opal pomp of autumn skies;
And when stern winter's tempests blow
To shrink beneath his robes of snow.

Sweet sylvan lake! that isle of thine
Is like one hope through grief to shine:
Is like one tie our life to cheer;
Is like one flower when all is sere;
One ray amidst the tempest's might;
One star amidst the gloom of night.

A FOREST WALK.

A LOVELY sky, a cloudless sun,
A wind that breathes of leaves and flowers,
O'er hill, through dale, my steps have run
To the cool forest's shadowy bowers;
One of the paths all round that wind,
Traced by the browsing herds, I choose,
And sights and sounds of human kind
In Nature's lone recesses lose:
The beech displays its marbled bark,
The spruce its green tent stretches wide,
While scowls the hemlock grim and dark,
The maple's scalloped dome beside.
All weave on high a verdant roof
That keeps the very sun aloof.
Making a twilight soft and green
Within the columned, vaulted scene.

Sweet forest-odors have their birth
From the clothed boughs and teeming earth;
Where pine-cones dropped, leaves piled and dead
Long tufts of grass, and stars of fern,
With many a wild flower's fairy inn,
A thick, elastic carpet spread:
Here, with its mossy pall, the trunk,
Resolving into soil, is sunk;
There, wrenched but lately from its throne
By some fierce whirlwind circling past,
Its huge roots massed with earth and stone,
One of the woodland kings is cast.

Above, the forest-tips are bright
With the broad blaze of sunny light;
But now a fitful air-gust parts
The screening branches, and a glow
Of dazzling, startling radiance darts
Down the dark stems, and breaks below:
The mingled shadows off are rolled.
The sylvan floor is bathed in gold;

Low sprouts and herbs, before unseen
Display their shades of brown and green:
Tints brighten o'er the velvet moss,
Gleams twinkle on the laurel's gloss;
The robin, brooding in her nest,
Chirps as the quick ray strikes her breast;
And, as my shadow prints the ground,
I see the rabbit upward bound,
With pointed ears an instant look,
Then scamper to the darkest nook,
Where, with crouched limb and staring eye,
He watches while I saunter by.

A narrow vista, carpeted
With rich green grass, invites my tread:
Here showers the light in golden dots,
There drops the shade in ebon spots,
So blended that the very air
Seems net-work as I enter there.
The partridge, whose deep-rolling drum
  Afar has sounded in my ear,
Ceasing his beatings as I come,
  Whirs to the sheltering branches near;
The little milk-snake glides away,
The brindled marmot dives from day;
And now, between the boughs, a space
Of the blue, laughing sky, I trace:
On each side shrinks the bowery shade;
Before me spreads an emerald glade;
The sunshine steeps its grass and moss;
That couch my footsteps as I cross;
Merrily hums the tawny bee,
The glittering humming-bird I see;
Floats the bright butterfly along,
The insect choir is loud in song;
A spot of light and life, it seems, —
A fairy haunt for Fancy's dreams.

Here stretched, the pleasant turf I press
In luxury of idleness;
Sun-streaks, and glancing wings, and sky
Spotted with cloud-shapes charm my eye:
While murmuring grass and waving trees —
Their leaf-harps sounding to the breeze —
And water-tones that tinkle near,
Blend their sweet music to my ear;
And by the changing shades alone,
The passage of the hours is known.

THE BLUE-BIRD'S SONG.

Hark, that sweet carol! With delight
  We leave the stifling room;
The little bluebird meets our sight,—
  Spring, glorious spring, has come!
The south-wind's balm is in the air,
The melting snow-wreaths everywhere
  Are leaping off in showers;
And Nature, in her brightening looks,
Tells that her flowers, and leaves, and brooks,
  And birds, will soon be ours.

[*From "The Nook in the Forest."*]

A PICTURE.

The branches arch and shape a pleasant bower,
Breaking white cloud, blue sky, and sunshine bright
Into pure ivory and sapphire spots,
And flecks of gold; a soft, cool emerald tint
Colors the air, as though the delicate leaves
Emitted self-born light. What splendid walls,
And what a gorgeous roof, carved by the hand
Of glorious Nature! Here the spruce thrusts in
Its bristling plume, tipped with its pale-green points;
The hemlock shows its borders freshly fringed;
The smoothly-scalloped beech-leaf and the birch,
Cut into ragged edges, interlace:
While here and there, through clefts, the laurel hangs
Its gorgeous chalices half-brimmed with dew,

As though to hoard it for the haunting elves,
The moonlight calls to this, their festal hall.
A thick, rich, grassy carpet clothes the earth
Sprinkled with autumn leaves. The fern displays
Its fluted wreath, beaded beneath with drops
Of richest brown; the wild-rose spreads its breast
Of delicate pink, and the o'erhanging fir
Has dropped its dark, long cone.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING.

CONSTANCY.

Out upon it! I have loved
Three whole days together;
And am like to love thee more,
If it prove fair weather.

Time shall moult away his wings,
Ere he shall discover
In the whole wide world again,
Such a constant lover.

But the spite on't is, no praise
Is due at all to me;
Love with me had made no stays,
Except it had been she.

Had it any been but she
And that very face,
There had been at least, ere this,
A dozen in her place!

WHY SO PALE AND WAN, FOND LOVER?

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prithee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prithee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prithee, why so mute!

Quit, quit for shame, this will not move,
This cannot take her;
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her.

I PRITHEE SEND ME BACK MY HEART.

I prithee send me back my heart,
Since I can not have thine,
For if from yours you will not part,
Why then should'st thou have mine?

Yet now I think on't, let it lie,
To find it were in vain;
For thou'st a thief in either eye
Would steal it back again.

Why should two hearts in one breast lie,
And yet not lodge together?
O love! where is thy sympathy,
If thus our breasts thou sever?

But love is such a mystery,
I cannot find it out;
For when I think I'm best resolved,
I then am in most doubt.

Then farewell, care, and farewell, woe,
I will no longer pine;
For I'll believe I have her heart
As much as she has mine.

EARL OF SURREY (HENRY HOWARD).

THE MEANS TO ATTAIN HAPPY LIFE.

Martial, the things that do attain
The happy life, be these, I find;
The riches left, not got with pain;
The fruitful ground, the quiet mind:

The equal friend, no grudge, no strife;
No charge of rule, nor governance;
Without disease, the healthful life;
The household of continuance:

The mean diet, no delicate fare;
True wisdom joined with simpleness;
The night dischargèd of all care,
Where wine the wit may not oppress:

The faithful wife, without debate;
Such sleeps as may beguile the night.
Content thee with thine own estate;
Ne wish for death, ne fear his might.

FROM "NO AGE IS CONTENT."

I saw the little boy
In thought — how oft that he
Did wish of God to 'scape the rod,
A tall young man to be:
The young man eke, that feels
His bones with pains opprest,
How he would be a rich old man,
To live and lie at rest.

The rich old man that sees
His end draw on so sore,
How he would be a boy again,
To live so much the more;
Whereat full oft I smiled,
To see how all these three,
From boy to man, from man to boy,
Would chop and change degree.

IN PRAISE OF HIS LADY-LOVE COMPARED WITH ALL OTHERS.

Give place, ye lovers, here before
That spent your boasts and brags in vain;
My lady's beauty passeth more
The best of yours, I dare well say'n,
Than doth the sun the candle light,
Or brightest day the darkest night.

And thereto hath a troth as just
As had Penelope the fair;
For what she saith ye may it trust,
As it by writing sealèd were;
And virtues hath she many mo'
Than I with pen have skill to show.

I could rehearse, if that I would,
The whole effect of Nature's plaint,
When she had lost the perfit mould,
The like to whom she could not paint:
With wringing hands, how she did cry,
And what she said, I know it, I.

I know she swore with raging mind,
Her kingdom only set apart,
There was no loss by law of kind
That could have gone so near her heart;
And this was chiefly all her pain;
"She could not make the like again."

Sith Nature thus gave her the praise
To be the chiefest work she wrought;
In faith, methink! some better ways
On your behalf might well be sought,
Than to compare, as ye have done,
To match the candle with the sun.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

IN MEMORY OF BARRY CORNWALL.

In the garden of death, where the singers whose names are deathless,
One with another make music unheard of men,
Where the dead sweet roses fade not of lips long breathless,
And the fair eyes shine that shall weep not or change again,
Who comes now crowned with the blossom of snow-white years?
What music is this that the world of the dead men hears?

Beloved of men, whose words on our lips were honey,
Whose name in our ears and our fathers' ears was sweet,
Like summer gone forth of the land his songs made sunny,
To the beautiful veiled bright world where the glad ghosts meet,
Child, father, bridegroom and bride, and anguish and rest,
No soul shall pass of a singer than this more blest.

Blest for the years' sweet sake that were filled and brightened,
As a forest with birds, with the fruit and the flower of his song;
For the souls' sake blest that heard, and their cares were lightened,
For the hearts' sake blest that have fostered his name so long;
By the living and dead lips blest that have loved his name,
And clothed with their praise and crowned with their love for fame.

Ah, fair and fragrant his fame as flowers that close not,
That shrink not by day for heat or for cold by night,
As a thought in the heart shall increase when the heart's self knows not,
Shall endure in our ears as a sound, in our eyes as a light;
Shall wax with the years that wane and the seasons' chime,
As a white rose thornless that grows in the garden of time.

The same year calls, and one goes hence with another,
And men sit sad that were glad for their sweet songs' sake;
The same year beckons, and elder with younger brother
Takes mutely the cup from his hand that we all shall take.*
They pass ere the leaves be past or the snows be come;
And the birds are loud, but the lips that outsang them dumb.

Time takes them home that we loved, fair names and famous,
To the soft long sleep, to the broad sweet bosom of death;
But the flower of their souls he shall take not away to shame us,
Nor the lips lack song forever that now lack breath.
For with us shall the music and perfume that die not dwell,
Though the dead to our dead bid welcome, and we farewell.

FROM "A VISION OF SPRING IN WINTER."

As sweet desire of day before the day,
As dreams of love before the true love born,
From the outer edge of winter overworn
The ghost arisen of May before the May

---

* Sydney Dobell died the same year.

Takes through dim air her unawakened way,
The gracious ghost of morning risen ere morn.
With little unblown breasts and child-eyed looks
Following, the very maid, the girl-child spring,
Lifts windward her bright brows,
Dips her light feet in warm and moving brooks,
And kindles with her own mouth's coloring
The fearful firstlings of the plumeless boughs.

I seek thee sleeping, and awhile I see,
Fair face that art not, how thy maiden breath
Shall put at last the deadly days to death
And fill the fields, and fire the woods with thee,
And seaward hollows where my feet would be
When heaven shall hear the word that April saith,
To change the cold heart of the weary time,
To stir and soften all the time to tears,
Tears joyfuller than mirth;
As even to May's clear height the young days climb
With feet not swifter than those fair first years
Whose flowers revive not with thy flowers on earth.

I would not bid thee, though I might, give back
One good thing youth has given and borne away;
I crave not any comfort of the day
That is not, nor on time's retrodden track
Would turn to meet the white-robed hours or black
That long since left me on their mortal way;
Nor light nor love that has been, nor the breath
That comes with morning from the sun to be
And sets light hope on fire:
No fruit, no flower thought once too fair for death,
No flower nor hour once fallen from life's green tree,
No leaf once plucked or once-fulfilled desire.

The morning song beneath the stars that fled
With twilight through the moonless mountain air,
While youth with burning lips and wreathless hair
Sang toward the sun that was to crown his head,
Rising; the hopes that triumphed and fell dead,
The sweet swift eyes and songs of hours that were:
These may'st thou not give back forever; these,
As at the sea's heart all her wrecks lie waste,
Lie deeper than the sea;
But flowers thou may'st, and winds, and hours of ease,
And all its April to the world thou may'st
Give back, and half my April back to me.

A FORSAKEN GARDEN.

In a coign of the cliff between lowland and highland
At the sea-down's edge between windward and lee,
Walled round with rocks as an inland island,
The ghost of a garden fronts the sea.

A girdle of brushwood and thorn encloses
  The steep square slope of the blossomless bed
Where the weeds that grew green from the graves of its roses
    Now lie dead.

The fields fall southward, abrupt and broken,
  To the low last edge of the long lone sand.
If a step should sound or a word be spoken,
  Would a ghost not rise of the strange guest's hand?
So long have the gray bare walks lain guestless,
  Through branches and briers if a man make way,
He shall find no life but the sea-wind's, restless
    Night and day.

The dense hard passage is blind and stifled
  That crawls by a track none turn to climb
To the strait waste place that the years have rifled
  Of all but the thorns that are touched not of time.
The thorns he spares when the rose is taken;
  The rocks are left when he wastes the plain.
The wind that wanders, the weeds wind-shaken,
    These remain.

Not a flower to be prest of the foot that falls not;
  As the heart of a dead man the seed-plots are dry;
From the thicket of thorns whence the nightingale calls not,
  Could she call, there were never a rose to reply.
Over the meadows that blossom and wither
  Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song;
Only the sun and the rain come hither,
    All year long.

The sun burns sere and the rain dishevels
  One gaunt bleak blossom of scentless breath.
Only the wind here hovers and revels
  In a round where life seems barren as death.
Here there was laughing of old, there was weeping,
  Haply, of lovers none ever will know,
Whose eyes went seaward, a hundred sleeping
    Years ago.

Heart handfast in heart as they stood, "Look thither,"
  Did he whisper? "Look forth from the flowers to the sea;
For the foam-flowers endure when the rose-blossoms wither,
  And men that love lightly may die — but we?"
And the same wind sang and the same waves whitened,
  And or ever the garden's last petals were shed,
In the lips that had whispered, the eyes that had lightened,
    Love was dead.

Or they loved their life through, and then went whither?
  And were one to the end — but what end who knows?
Love deep as the sea, as a rose must wither,
  As the rose-red sea-weed that mocks the rose.

Shall the dead take thought for the dead to love them?
  What love was ever as deep as a grave?
They are loveless now as the grass above them,
    Or the wave.

All are at one now, roses and lovers,
  Not known of the cliffs and the fields and the sea.
Not a breath of the time that has been hovers
  In the air now soft with a summer to be.
Not a breath shall there sweeten the seasons hereafter
  Of the flowers or the lovers that laugh now or weep,
When, as they that are free now of weeping and laughter,
    We shall sleep.

Here death may deal not again forever;
  Here change may come not till all change end.
From the graves they have made they shall rise up never,
  Who have left naught living to ravage and rend.
Earth, stones, and thorns of the wild ground growing,
  While the sun and the rain live, these shall be;
Till a last wind's breath upon all these blowing
    Roll the sea;

Till the slow sea rise and the sheer cliff crumble,
  Till terrace and meadow the deep gulfs drink,
Till the strength of the waves of the high tides humble
  The fields that lessen, the rocks that shrink,
Here now in his triumph where all things falter,
  Stretched out on the spoils that his own hand spread,
As a god self-slain on his own strange altar,
    Death lies dead.

A MATCH.

If love were what the rose is,
  And I were like the leaf,
Our lives would grow together
In sad or singing weather,
Blown fields or flowerful closes,
  Green pleasure or gray grief:
If love were what the rose is,
  And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
  And love were like the tune,
With double sound and single
Delight our lips would mingle,
With kisses glad as birds are
  That get sweet rain at noon;
If I were what the words are
  And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling.
  And I your love were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather
With daffodil and starling
  And hours of fruitful breath;
If you were life, my darling,
  And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
  And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons,
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow,
  And laughs of maid and boy;
If you were thrall to sorrow.
  And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
  And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours.
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady,
  And night were bright like day;
If you were April's lady,
  And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
  And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying-feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
  And find his mouth a rein;
If you were queen of pleasure,
  And I were king of pain.

FROM "CHRISTMAS ANTIPHONES."

IN CHURCH.

THOU whose birth on earth
  Angels sang to men,
While thy stars made mirth,
Saviour, at thy birth,
  This day born again;

As this night was bright
  With thy cradle-ray,
Very Light of light,
Turn the wild world's night
  To thy perfect day.

God, whose feet made sweet
  Those wild ways they trod,
From thy fragrant feet
Staining field and street
  With the blood of God;

God, whose breast is rest
  In the time of strife,
In thy secret breast
Sheltering souls opprest
  From the heat of life;

God, whose eyes are skies,
  Love-lit as with spheres,
By the lights that rise
To thy watching eyes,
  Orbèd lights of tears;

God, whose heart hath part
  In all grief that is,
Was not man's the dart
That went through thine heart,
  And the wound not his?

Where the pale souls wail,
  Held in bonds of death,
Where all spirits quail,
Came thy Godhead pale
  Still from human breath,—

Pale from life and strife,
  Wan with manhood, came
Forth of mortal life,
Pierced as with a knife,
  Scarred as with a flame.

Thou, the Word and Lord
  In all time and space
Heard, beheld, adored,
With all ages poured
  Forth before thy face;

Lord, what worth in earth
  Drew thee down to die?
What therein was worth,
Lord, thy death and birth?
  What beneath thy sky?

Light, above all love,
  By thy love was lit,
And brought down the dove
Feathered from above
  With the wings of it.

From the height of night,
  Was not thine the star
That led forth with might
By no worldly light
  Wise men from afar?

Yet the wise men's eyes
  Saw thee not more clear
Than they saw thee rise
Who in shepherd's guise
  Drew as poor men near.

Yet thy poor endure,
  And are with us yet;
Be thy name a sure
Refuge for thy poor
  Whom men's eyes forget.

Thou whose ways we praise,
  Clear alike and dark,
Keep our works and ways
This and all thy days
  Safe inside thine ark.

Who shall keep thy sheep,
  Lord, and lose not one?
Who save one shall keep,
Lest the shepherds sleep?
  Who beside the Son?

From the grave-deep wave,
  From the sword and flame,
Thou, even Thou, shalt save
Souls of king and slave
  Only by thy Name.

Light not born with morn
  Or her fires above,
Jesus virgin-born,
Held of men in scorn,
  Turn their scorn to love.

Thou whose face gives grace
  As the sun's doth heat,
Let thy sunbright face
Lighten time and space
  Here beneath thy feet.

Bid our peace increase,
  Thou that madest morn;
Bid oppressions cease;
Bid the night be peace;
  Bid the day be born.

OUTSIDE CHURCH.

We whose days and ways
  All the night makes dark,
What day shall we praise
Of these weary days
  That our life-drops mark?

We whose mind is blind,
  Fed with hope of nought;
Wastes of worn mankind,
Without heart or mind,
  Without meat or thought;

We with strife of life
  Worn till all life cease,
Want, a whetted knife,
Sharpening strife on strife,
  How should we love peace?

Ye whose meat is sweet
  And your wine-cup red,
Us beneath your feet
Hunger grinds as wheat,
  Grinds to make you bread.

Ye whose night is bright
  With soft rest and heat,
Clothed like day with light,
Us the naked night
  Slays from street to street.

Hath your God no rod,
  That ye tread so light?
Man on us as God,
God as man hath trod,
  Trod us down with might.

We that one by one
  Bleed from either's rod,
What for us hath done
Man beneath the sun,
  What for us hath God?

We whose blood is food
  Given your wealth to feed,
From the Christless rood
Red with no God's blood,
  But with man's indeed;

How shall we that see
  Night-long overhead
Life, the flowerless tree,
Nailed whereon as we
  Were our fathers dead,—

We whose ear can hear,
  Not whose tongue can name,
Famine, ignorance, fear,
Bleeding tear by tear,
  Year by year of shame,

Till the dry life die
  Out of bloodless breast,
Out of beamless eye,
Out of mouths that cry
  Till death feed with rest,—

How shall we as ye,
  Though ye bid us, pray?
Though ye call, can we
Hear you call, or see,
  Though ye show us day?

We whose name is shame,
  We whose souls walk bare,
Shall we call the same
God as ye by name,
  Teach our lips your prayer?

God, forgive and give,
  For His sake who died?
Nay, for ours who live,
How shall we forgive
  Thee, then, on our side?

We whose right to light
  Heaven's high noon denies,
Whom the blind beams smite
That for you shine bright,
  And but burn our eyes.

With what dreams of beams
  Shall we build up day,
At what sourceless streams
Seek to drink in dreams
  Ere they pass away?

In what street shall meet,
  At what market-place,
Your feet and our feet,
With one goal to greet,
  Having run one race?

What one hope shall ope
  For us all as one,
One same horoscope,
Where the soul sees hope
  That outburns the sun?

At what shrine what wine,
  At what board what bread,
Salt as blood or brine,
Shall we share in sign
  How we poor were fed?

In what hour what power
  Shall we pray for morn,
If your perfect hour,
When all day bears flower,
  Not for us is born?

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

MENE, MENE.

THAT precious, priceless gift, a soul
Unto thyself surrendered whole,
Withdrawn from all but thy control,
    Thou hast foregone.

The throne where none might sit but thou,
The crown of love to bind thy brow,
Glad homage paid with praise and vow,
    Thou hast foregone.

I do not blame thee utterly,
But rather strive to pity thee,
Remembering all the empery
    Thou hast foregone.

It was thy folly, not thy crime,
To have contemned the call sublime,
The realm more firm than fate or time
    Thou hast foregone.

BEATI ILLI.

BLEST is the man whose heart and hands are pure!
He hath no sickness that he shall not cure,
No sorrow that he may not well endure:
His feet are steadfast and his hope is sure.

Oh, blest is he who ne'er hath sold his soul,
Whose will is perfect, and whose word is whole,
Who hath not paid to common sense the toll
Of self-disgrace, nor owned the world's control!

Through clouds and shadows of the darkest night
He will not lose a glimmering of the light,

Nor, though the sun of day be shrouded quite,
Swerve from the narrow path to left or right.

ON THE HILL-SIDE.

The winds behind me in the thicket sigh,
The bees fly droning on laborious wing,
Pink cloudlets scarcely float across the sky.
September stillness broods o'er everything.
Deep peace is in my soul: I seem to hear
Catullus murmuring, "Let us live and love;
Suns rise and set, and fill the rolling year
Which bears us deathward, therefore let us love;
Pour forth the wine of kisses, let them flow,
And let us drink our fill before we die."
Hush! in the thicket still the breezes blow;
Pink cloudlets sail across the azure sky;
The bees warp lazily on laden wing;
Beauty and stillness brood o'er everything.

THE WILL.

Blame not the times in which we live,
Nor Fortune frail and fugitive;
Blame not thy parents, nor the rule
Of vice or wrong once learned at school;
But blame thyself, O man!

Although both heaven and earth combined
To mould thy flesh and form thy mind,
Though every thought, word, action, will,
Was framed by powers beyond thee, still
Thou art thyself, O man!

And self to take or leave is free,
Feeling its own sufficiency:
In spite of science, spite of fate,
The judge within thee, soon or late,
Will blame but thee, O man!

Say not, "I would, but could not — He
Should bear the blame who fashioned me —
Call you mere change of motive choice?" —
Scorning such pleas, the inner voice
Cries, "Thine the deed, O man!"

FAREWELL.

Thou goest: to what distant place
Wilt thou thy sunlight carry?
I stay with cold and clouded face:
How long am I to tarry?
Where'er thou goest, morn will be:
Thou leavest night and gloom to me.

The night and gloom I can but take
I do not grudge thy splendor:
Bid souls of eager men awake;
Be kind and bright and tender.
Give day to other worlds; for me
It must suffice to dream of thee.

NEW LIFE, NEW LOVE.

April is in:
New loves begin!
Up, lovers all,
The cuckoos call!
Winter is by.
Blue shines the sky,
Primroses blow
Where lay cold snow:
Then why should I
Sit still and sigh?

Death took my dear:
Oh, pain! Oh, fear!
I know not whither,
When flowers did wither,
My summer love
Flew far above.

Now must I find
One to my mind:
The world is wide;
Spring fields are pied
With flowers for thee,
New love, and me!

April is in:
New loves begin!
Up, lovers all,
The cuckoos call!

FROM FRIEND TO FRIEND.

Dear friend, I know not if such days and nights
Of fervent comradeship as we have spent,
Or if twin minds with equal ardor bent
To search the world's unspeakable delights,
Or if long hours passed on Parnassian heights
Together in rapt interminglement
Of heart with heart on thought sublime intent,
Or if the spark of heaven-born fire that lights
Love in both breasts from boyhood, thus have wrought
Our spirits to communion; but I swear
That neither chance nor change nor time nor aught
That makes the future of our lives less fair,
Shall sunder us who once have breathed this air.
Of soul-commingling friendship passion-fraught.

THE PONTE DI PARADISO.

Of all the mysteries wherethrough we move,
This is the most mysterious — that a face,
Seen peradventure in some distant place,
Whither we can return no more to prove
The world-old sanctities of human love,
Shall haunt our waking thoughts, and gathering grace
Incorporate itself with every phase
Whereby the soul aspires to God above.
Thus are we wedded through that face to her
Or him who bears it; nay, one fleeting glance.
Fraught with a tale too deep for utterance,
Even as a pebble cast into the sea,
Will on the deep waves of our spirit stir
Ripples that run through all eternity.

[*From The Alps and Italy.*]

SELF.

'Tis self whereby we suffer; 'tis the greed
To grasp, the hunger to assimilate
All that earth holds of fair and delicate,
The lust to blend with beauteous lives, to feed
And take our fill of loveliness, which breed
This anguish of the soul intemperate;
'Tis self that turns to pain and poisonous hate
The calm clear life of love the angels lead.
O, that 'twere possible this self to burn
In the pure flames of joy contemplative!

THE PRAYER TO MNEMOSYNE.

Lady, when first the message came to me
Of thy great hope and all thy future bliss,
I had no envy of that happiness
Which sets a limit to our joy in thee:
But uttering orisons to gods who see
Our mortal strife, and bidding them to bless

With increase of pure good thy goodliness,
I made unto the mild Mnemosyne
More for myself than thee one prayer—that when
Our paths are wholly severed, and thy years
Glide among other cares and far-off men,
She may watch over thee, as one who hears
The music of the past, and in thine ears
Murmur "They live and love thee now as then."

SONNETS FROM "INTELLECTUAL ISOLATION."

Nay, soul, though near to dying, do not this!
It may be that the world and all its ways
Seem but spent ashes of extinguished days
And love, the phantom of imagined bliss;
Yet what is man among the mysteries
Whereof the young-eyed angels sang their praise?
Thou know'st not. Lone and wildered in the maze,
See that life's crown thou dost not idly miss.
Is friendship fickle? Hast thou found her so?
Is God more near thee on that homeless sea
Than by the hearths where children come and go?
Perchance some rotten root of sin in thee
Hath made thy garden cease to bloom and glow:
Hast thou no need from thine own self to flee?

It is the centre of the soul that ails:
We carry with us our own heart's disease;
And craving the impossible, we freeze
The lively rills of love that never fails.
What faith, what hope will lend the spirit sails
To waft her with a light spray-scattering breeze
From this Calypso isle of phantasies,
Self-sought, self-gendered, where the daylight pales?
Where wandering visions of foregone desires
Pursue her sleepless on a stony strand;
Instead of stars the bleak and baleful fires
Of vexed imagination, quivering spires
That have nor rest nor substance, light the land,
Paced by lean hungry men, a ghostly band!

Oh, that the waters of oblivion
Might purge the burdened soul of her life's dross,
Cleansing dark overgrowths that dull the gloss
Wherewith her pristine gold so purely shone!
Oh, that some spell might make us dream undone
Those deeds that fret our pillow, when we toss
Racked by the torments of that living cross
Where memory frowns, a grim centurion!
Sleep, the kind soother of our bodily smart,
Is bought and sold by scales-weight; quivering nerves
Sink into slumber when the hand of art
Hath touched some hidden spring of brain or heart:
But for the tainted will no medicine serves;
The road from sin to suffering never swerves.

What skill shall anodyne the mind diseased?
Did Rome's fell tyrant cure his secret sore

With those famed draughts of cooling hellebore?
What opiates on the fiends of thought have seized?
This fever of the spirit hath been eased
By no grave simples culled on any shore;
No surgeon's knife, no muttered charm, no lore
Of Phœbus Paian have those pangs appeased.

Herself must be her savior. Side by side
Spring poisonous weed and hopeful antidote
Within her tangled herbage; lonely pride
And humble fellow-service; dreams that dote
Deeds that aspire; foul sloth, free labor: she
Hath power to choose, and what she wills, to be.

THOMAS NOON TALFOURD.

[*From Ion.*]

LITTLE KINDNESSES.

The blessings which the weak and poor can scatter
Have their own season. 'Tis a little thing
To give a cup of water; yet its draught
Of cool refreshment, drained by fevered lips,
May give a shock of pleasure to the frame
More exquisite than when nectarian juice
Renews the life of joy in happiest hours.
It is a little thing to speak a phrase
Of common comfort, which by daily use
Has almost lost its sense; yet in the ear
Of him who thought to die unmourned, 'twill fall
Like choicest music, fill the glazing eye
With gentle tears; relax the knotted hand
To know the bonds of fellowship again,
And shed on the departing soul, a sense
More precious than the benison of friends
About the honored death-bed of the rich
To him who else were lonely, that another
Of the great family is near, and feels.

ON THE RECEPTION OF WORDSWORTH AT OXFORD.

Oh! never did a mighty truth prevail
With such felicities of place and time
As in those shouts sent forth with joy sublime
Fram the full heart of England's youth, to hail
Her once neglected bard within the pale
Of Learning's fairest citadel! That voice,
In which the future thunders, bids rejoice
Some who through wintry fortunes did not fail
To bless with love as deep as life, the name
Thus welcomed;—who in happy silence share
The triumph; while their fondest musings claim
Unhoped-for echoes in the joyous air,
That to their long-loved poet's spirit bear
A nation's promise of undying fame.

ROBERT TANNAHILL.

THE MIDGES DANCE ABOON THE BURN.

THE midges dance aboon the burn;
  The dews begin to fa';
The pairtricks down the rushy holm
  Set up their e'ening ca'.
Now loud and clear the blackbird's sang
  Rings through the briery shaw,
While flitting gay, the swallows play
  Around the castle wa'.

Beneath the golden gloamin' sky
  The mavis mends her lay;
The red-breast pours his sweetest strains,
  To charm the ling'ring day;
While weary yeldrins seem to wail
  Their little nestlings torn,
The merry wren, frae den to den,
  Gaes jinking through the thorn.

The roses fauld their silken leaves,
  The foxglove shuts its bell;
The honeysuckle and the birk
  Spread fragrance through the dell.
Let others crowd the giddy court
  Of mirth and revelry,
The simple joys that Nature yields
  Are dearer far to me.

THE FLOWER O' DUMBLANE.

THE sun has gane down o'er the lofty Benlomond,
  And left the red clouds to preside o'er the scene,
While lanely I stray in the calm summer gloamin',
  To muse on sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

How sweet is the brier, wi' its saft fauldin' blossom,
  And sweet is the birk, wi' its mantle o' green;
Yet sweeter and fairer, and dear to this bosom,
  Is lovely young Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

She's modest as ony, and blithe as she's bonnie,—
  For guileless simplicity marks her its ain;
And far be the villain, divested of feeling,
  Wha'd blight in its bloom the sweet flower o' Dumblane.

Sing on, thou sweet mavis, thy hymn to the e'ening,—
  Thou'rt dear to the echoes of Calderwood glen;
Sae dear to this bosom, sae artless and winning,
  Is charming young Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

How lost were my days till I met wi' my Jessie!
  The sports o' the city seemed foolish and vain;
I ne'er saw a nymph I would ca' my dear lassie
  Till charmed wi' sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

Though mine were the station o' loftiest grandeur,
  Amidst its profusion I'd languish in pain,
And reckon as naething the height o' its splendor,
  If wanting sweet Jessie, the flower o' Dumblane.

BAYARD TAYLOR.

ON THE HEADLAND.

I SIT on the lonely headland,
Where the sea-gulls come and go:
The sky is gray above me,
And the sea is gray below.

There is no fisherman's pinnace
Homeward or outward bound;
I see no living creature
In the world's deserted round.

I pine for something human,
Man, woman, young or old,—
Something to meet and welcome,
Something to clasp and hold.

I have a mouth for kisses,
But there's no one to give and take;
I have a heart in my bosom
Beating for nobody's sake.

O warmth of love that is wasted!
Is there none to stretch a hand?
No other heart that hungers
In all the living land?

I could fondle the fisherman's baby,
And rock it into rest;
I could take the sunburnt sailor,
Like a brother, to my breast,

I could clasp the hand of any
Outcast of land or sea,
If the guilty palm but answered
The tenderness in me!

The sea might rise and drown me;
Cliffs fall and crush my head,—
Were there one to love me, living,
Or weep to see me dead!

THE FATHER.

THE fateful hour, when death stood by
And stretched his threatening hand in vain,
Is over now, and life's first cry
Speaks feeble triumph through its pain.

But yesterday, and thee the earth
Inscribed not on her mighty scroll:
To-day she opes the gate of birth,
And gives the spheres another soul.

But yesterday, no fruit from me
The rising winds of time had hurled
To-day, a father,— can it be
A child of mine is in the world?

I look upon the little frame,
As helpless on my arm it lies:
Thou giv'st me, child, a father's name,
God's earliest name in Paradise.

Like Him, creator too I stand:
His power and mystery seem more near;
Thou giv'st me honor in the land,
And giv'st my life duration here.

But love, to-day, is more than pride;
Love sees his star of triumph shine,
For life nor death can now divide
The souls that wedded breathe in thine:

Mine and thy mother's, whence arose
The copy of my face in thee;
And as thine eyelids first unclose,
My own young eyes look up to me.

Look on me, child, once more, once more,
Even with those weak, unconscious eyes;
Stretch the small hands that help implore;
Salute me with thy wailing cries!

This is the blessing and the prayer
A father's sacred place demands:
Ordain me, darling, for thy care,
And lead me with thy helpless hands!

A FUNERAL THOUGHT.

When the stern genius, to whose hollow tramp
Echo the startled chambers of the soul,
Waves his inverted torch o'er that pale camp
Where the archangel's final trumpets roll,
I would not meet him in the chamber dim,
Hushed, and pervaded with a nameless fear,
When the breath flutters and the senses swim,
And the dread hour is near.

Though love's dear arms might clasp me fondly then
As if to keep the Summoner at bay,
And woman's woe and the calm grief of men
Hallow at last the chill, unbreathing clay,—
These are earth's fetters, and the soul would shrink,
Thus bound, from darkness and the dread unknown,
Stretching its arms from death's eternal brink,
Which it must dare alone.

But in the awful silence of the sky,
Upon some mountain summit, yet untrod,
Through the blue ether would I climb, to die
Afar from mortals and alone with God!
To the pure keeping of the stainless air
Would I resign my faint and fluttering breath,
And with the rapture of an answered prayer
Receive the kiss of Death.

Then to the elements my frame would turn;
No worms should riot on my coffined clay,
But the cold limbs, from that sepulchral urn,
In the slow storms of ages waste away.
Loud winds and thunder's diapason high
Should be my requiem through the coming time,
And the white summit, fading in the sky,
My monument sublime.

PROPOSAL.

The violet loves a sunny bank,
The cowslip loves the lea;
The scarlet creeper loves the elm,
But I love — thee.

The sunshine kisses mount and vale,
The stars, they kiss the sea;
The west winds kiss the clover-bloom,
But I kiss — thee!

The oriole weds his mottled mate:
The lily's bride of the bee;
Heaven's marriage-ring is round the earth,—
Shall I wed thee?

WIND AND SEA.

The sea is a jovial comrade.
He laughs wherever he goes;
His merriment shines in the dimpling lines
That wrinkle his hale repose;
He lays himself down at the feet of the Sun,
And shakes all over with glee,
And the broad-backed billows fall faint on the shore,
In the mirth of the mighty Sea!

But the Wind is sad and restless,
And cursed with an inward pain!
You may hark as you will, by valley or hill,
But you hear him still complain.
He wails on the barren mountains,
And shrieks on the wintry sea;
He sobs in the cedar, and moans in the pine,
And shudders all over the aspen tree.

Welcome are both their voices,
And I know not which is best, —

The laughter that slips from the Ocean's lips,
Or the comfortless Wind's unrest.
There's a pang in all rejoicing,
A joy in the heart of pain,
And the Wind that saddens, the Sea that gladdens,
Are singing the self-same strain!

IN THE MEADOWS.

I LIE in the summer meadows,
In the meadows all alone,
With the infinite sky above me,
And the sun on his midday throne.

The smell of the flowering grasses
Is sweeter than any rose,
And a million happy insects
Sing in the warm repose.

The mother lark that is brooding
Feels the sun on her wings,
And the deeps of the noonday glitter
With swarms of fairy things.

From the billowy green beneath me
To the fathomless blue above,
The creatures of God are happy
In the warmth of their summer love.

The infinite bliss of Nature
I feel in every vein;
The light and the life of summer
Blossom in heart and brain.

But darker than any shadow
By thunder-clouds unfurled,
The awful truth arises,
That Death is in the world.

And the sky may beam as ever,
And never a cloud be curled;
And the airs be living odors,
But Death is in the world!

Out of the deeps of sunshine
The invisible bolt is hurled:
There's life in the summer meadows,
But Death is in the world.

BEFORE THE BRIDAL.

Now the night is overpast,
And the mist is cleared away:
On my barren life at last
Breaks the bright, reluctant day.

Day of payment for the wrong
I was doomed so long to bear;
Day of promise, day of song,
Day that makes the future fair!

Let me wake to bliss alone;
Let me bury every fear:
What I prayed for is my own;
What was distant, now is near.

For the happy hour that waits
No reproachful shade shall bring.
And I hear forgiving Fates
In the happy bells that ring.

Leave the song that now is mute,
For the sweeter song begun:
Leave the blossom for the fruit,
And the rainbow for the sun!

SQUANDERED LIVES.

THE fisherman wades in the surges;
The sailor sails over the sea;
The soldier steps bravely to battle;
The woodman lays axe to the tree.

They are each of the breed of the heroes,
The manhood attempered in strife;
Strong hands that go lightly to labor,
True hearts that take comfort in life.

In each is the seed to replenish
The world with the vigor it needs,—
The centre of honest affections,
The impulse to generous deeds.

But the shark drinks the blood of the fisher;
The sailor is dropped in the sea;
The soldier lies cold by his cannon;
The woodman is crushed by his tree.

Each prodigal life that is wasted
In manly achievement unseen,
But lengthens the days of the coward,
And strengthens the crafty and mean.

The blood of the noblest is lavished
That the selfish a profit may find;
But God sees the lives that are squandered,
And we to His wisdom are blind.

THE LOST MAY.

When May, with cowslip-braided locks,
Walks through the land in green attire,
And burns in meadow-grass the phlox
His torch of purple fire:

When buds have burst the silver sheath,
And shifting pink, and gray, and gold
Steal o'er the woods, while fair beneath
The bloomy vales unfold:

When, emerald-bright, the hemlock stands
New-feathered, needled new, the pine;
And, exiles from the orient lands,
The turbaned tulips shine:

When wild azaleas deck the knoll,
And cinque-foil stars the fields of home,
And winds, that take the white-weed, roll
The meadows into foam:

Then from the jubilee I turn
To other Mays that I have seen,
Where more resplendent blossoms burn,
And statelier woods are green;—

Mays when my heart expanded first,
A honeyed blossom, fresh with dew;
And one sweet wind of heaven dispersed
The only clouds I knew.

For she, whose softly murmured name
The music of the month expressed,
Walked by my side, in holy shame
Of girlish love confessed,

The budding chestnuts overhead,
Their sprinkled shadows in the lane,—
Blue flowers along the brooklet's bed,—
I see them all again!

The old, old tale of girl and boy,
Repeated ever, never old:
To each in turn the gates of joy,
The gates of heaven unfold.

And when the punctual May arrives,
With cowslip-garland on her brow,
We know what once she gave our lives,
And cannot give us now!

THE MYSTERY.

Thou art not dead; thou art not gone to dust;
No line of all thy loveliness shall fall
To formless ruin, smote by Time, and thrust
Into the solemn gulf that covers all.

Thou canst not wholly perish, though the sod
Sink with its violets closer to thy breast;
Though by the feet of generations trod,
The headstone crumble from thy place of rest.

The marvel of thy beauty cannot die;
The sweetness of thy presence shall not fade;
Earth gave not all the glory of thine eye,—
Death may not keep what Death has never made.

It was not thine, that forehead strange and cold,
Nor those dumb lips, they hid beneath the snow;
Thy heart would throb beneath that passive fold,
Thy hands for me that stony clasp forego.

But thou hadst gone, — gone from the dreary land,
Gone from the storms let loose on every hill,
Lured by the sweet persuasion of a hand
Which leads thee somewhere in the distance still.

Where'er thou art, I know thou wearest yet
The same bewildering beauty, sanctified
By calmer joy, and touched with soft regret
For him who seeks, but cannot reach thy side.

I keep for thee the living love of old,
And seek thy place in Nature, as a child
Whose hand is parted from his playmate's hold,
Wanders and cries along a lonesome wild.

When, in the watches of my heart, I hear
The messages of purer life, and know
The footsteps of thy spirit lingering near,
The darkness hides the way that I should go.

Canst thou not bid the empty realms restore
That form, the symbol of thy heavenly part?
Or on the fields of barren silence pour
That voice, the perfect music of thy heart?

Oh, once, once bending to these widowed lips,
Take back the tender warmth of life from me,
Or let thy kisses cloud with swift eclipse
The light of mine, and give me death with thee?

THE SONG OF THE CAMP.

"Give us a song!" the soldiers cried,
The outer trenches guarding,
When the heated guns of the camps allied
Grew weary of bombarding.

The dark Redan, in silent scoff,
Lay, grim and threatening, under;
And the tawny mound of the Malakoff
No longer belched its thunder.

There was a pause. A guardsman said,
"We storm the forts to-morrow;
Sing while we may, another day
Will bring enough of sorrow."

They lay along the battery's side,
Below the smoking cannon:
Brave hearts, from Severn and from Clyde,
And from the banks of Shannon.

They sang of love, and not of fame;
Forgot was Britain's glory:
Each heart recalled a different name,
But all sang "Annie Lawrie."

Voice after voice caught up the song,
Until its tender passion
Rose like an anthem, rich and strong, —
Their battle-eve confession.

Dear girl, her name he dared not speak,
But, as the song grew louder,
Something upon the soldier's cheek
Washed off the stains of powder.

Beyond the darkening ocean burned
  The bloody sunset's embers,
While the Crimean valleys learned
  How English love remembers.

And once again a fire of hell
  Rained on the Russian quarters,
With scream of shot, and burst of shell,
  And bellowing of the mortars!

And Irish Nora's eyes are dim
  For a singer, dumb and gory;
And English Mary mourns for him
  Who sang of "Annie Lawrie."

Sleep, soldiers! still in honored rest
  Your truth and valor wearing:
The bravest are the tenderest, —
  The loving are the daring.

TO A BAVARIAN GIRL.

Thou, Bavaria's brown-eyed daughter,
    Art a shape of joy,
Standing by the Isar's water
    With thy brother-boy;
In thy dream, with idle fingers
    Threading through his curls,
On thy cheek the sun's kiss lingers,
    Rosiest of girls!

Woods of glossy oak are ringing
    With the echoes bland,
While thy generous voice is singing
    Songs of Fatherland, —
Songs, that by the Danube's river
    Sound on hills of vine,
And where waves in green light quiver,
    Down the rushing Rhine.

Life, with all its hues and changes,
    To thy heart doth lie
Like those dreamy Alpine ranges
    In the southern sky;
Where in haze the clefts are hidden,
    Which the foot should fear,
And the crags that fall unbidden
    Startle not the ear.

Where the village maidens gather
    At the fountain's brim,
Or in sunny harvest weather,
    With the reapers trim;
Where the autumn fires are burning
    On the vintage-hills;
Where the mossy wheels are turning
    In the ancient mills;

Where from ruined robber towers
    Hangs the ivy's hair,
And the crimson foxbell flowers
    On the crumbling stair: —
Everywhere, without thy presence,
    Would the sunshine fail,
Fairest of the maiden peasants!
    Flower of Isar's vale.

SIR HENRY TAYLOR.

[*From Philip Van Artevelde.*]

UNKNOWN GREATNESS.

He was a man of that unsleeping spirit,
He seemed to live by miracle: his food
Was glory, which was poison to his mind
And peril to his body. He was one
Of many thousand such that die betimes,
Whose story is a fragment, known to few.
Then comes the man who has the luck to live,
And he's a prodigy. Compute the chances,
And deem there's ne'er a one in dangerous times
Who wins the race of glory, but than him
A thousand men more gloriously endowed

Have fallen upon the course; a thousand others
Have had their fortunes foundered by a chance,
Whilst lighter barks pushed past them; to whom add
A smaller tally, of the singular few
Who, gifted with predominating powers,
Bear yet a temperate will and keep the peace.
The world knows nothing of its greatest men.

[*From Philip Van Artevelde.*]

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE.

This circulating principle of life
That vivifies the outside of the earth
And permeates the sea; that here and there
Awakening up a particle of matter,
Informs it, organizes, gives it power
To gather and associate to itself,
Transmute, incorporate other, for a term
Sustains the congruous fabric, and then quits it;
This vagrant principle so multiform,
Ebullient here and undetected there,
Is not unauthorized, nor increate,
Though indestructible. Life never dies;
Matter dies off it, and it lives elsewhere,
Or elsehow circumstanced and shaped; it goes;
At every instant we may say 'tis gone,
But never it hath ceased; the type is changed,
Is ever in transition, for life's law
To its eternal essence doth prescribe
Eternal mutability; and thus
To say I live — says, I partake of that
Which never dies. But how far I may hold
An interest indivisible from life
Through change (and whether it be mortal change,
Change of senescence, or of gradual growth,
Or other whatsoever 'tis alike)
Is question not of argument, but fact.
In all men some such interest inheres;
In most 'tis posthumous; the more expand
Our thoughts and feelings past the very present,
The more that interest overtakes of change
And comprehends, till what it comprehends
Is comprehended in eternity,
And in no less a span.

. . . . . .

Here we are
Engendered out of nothing cognizable.
If this be not a wonder, nothing is;
If this be wonderful, then all is so.
Man's grosser attributes can generate
What is not, and has never been at all;
What should forbid his fancy to restore
A being passed away? The wonder lies
In the mind merely of the wondering man.
Treading the steps of common life with eyes
Of curious inquisition, some will stare
At each discovery of Nature's ways,
As it were new to find that God contrives.

[*From Philip Van Artevelde.*]

LOVE RELUCTANT TO ENDANGER ITS OBJECT.

There is but one thing that still harks me back.
To bring a cloud upon the summer day
Of one so happy and so beautiful, —
It is a hard condition. For myself,
I know not that the circumstance of life
In all its changes can so far afflict me
As makes anticipation much worth while.
But she is younger, — of a sex beside
Whose spirits are to ours as flame to fire,
More sudden, and more perishable too;

So that the gust wherewith the one is kindled
Extinguishes the other. O she is fair!
As fair as heaven to look upon! as fair
As ever vision of the Virgin blest
That weary pilgrim, resting by the fount
Beneath the palm, and dreaming to the tune
Of flowing waters, duped his soul withal.
It was permitted in my pilgrimage
To rest beside the fount beneath the tree,
Beholding there no vision, but a maid
Whose form was light and graceful as the palm,
Whose heart was pure and jocund as the fount,
And spread a freshness and a verdure round.
This was permitted in my pilgrimage,
And loath am I to take my staff again.
Say that I fail not in this enterprise;
Yet must my life be full of hazardous turns,
And they that house with me must ever live
In imminent peril of some evil fate.

[*From Philip Van Artevelde.*]

NATURE'S NEED.

The human heart cannot sustain
Prolonged unalterable pain,
And not till reason cease to reign
Will nature want some moments brief
Of other moods to mix with grief;
Such and so hard to be destroyed
That vigor which abhors a void,
And in the midst of all distress,
Such Nature's need for happiness!
And when she rallied thus, more high
Her spirits ran, she knew not why,
Than was their wont, in times than these
Less troubled, with a heart at ease.
So meet extremes; so joy's rebound
Is highest from the hollowest ground;
So vessels with the storm that strive
Pitch higher as they deeplier dive.

[*From Philip Van Artevelde.*]

WHEN JOYS ARE KEENEST.

The sweets of converse and society
Are sweetest when they're snatched; the often-comer,
The boon companion of a thousand feasts,
Whose eye has grown familiar with the fair,
Whose tutored tongue, by practice perfect made,
Is tamely talkative, — he never knows
That truest, rarest light of social joy
Which gleams upon the man of many cares.

[*From Philip Van Artevelde.*]

RELAXATION.

It was not meant
By him who on the back the burden bound,
That cares, though public, critical, and grave,
Should so encase us and encrust, as shuts
The gate on what is beautiful below,
And clogs those entries of the soul of man
Which lead the way to what he hath of heaven.

WHAT MAKES A HERO?

What makes a hero? — not success, not fame,
Inebriate merchants, and the loud acclaim
Of glutted Avarice, — caps tossed up in air,
Or pen of journalist with flourish fair;
Bells pealed, stars, ribbons, and a titular name —
These, though his rightful tribute, he can spare;
His rightful tribute, not his end or aim,
Or true reward; for never yet did these

Refresh the soul, or set the heart at ease.
What makes a hero? — An heroic mind,
Expressed in action, in endurance proved.
And if there be pre-eminence of right,
Derived through pain well suffered, to the height
Of rank heroic, 'tis to bear unmoved,
Not toil, not risk, not rage of sea or wind,
Not the brute fury of barbarians blind,
But worse — ingratitude and poisonous darts,
Launched by the country he had served and loved:
This, with a free, unclouded spirit pure,
This, in the strength of silence to endure,
A dignity to noble deeds imparts
Beyond the gauds and trappings of renown;
This is the hero's complement and crown;
This missed, one struggle had been wanting still, —
One glorious triumph of the heroic will,
One self-approval in his heart of hearts.

JANE TAYLOR.

THE SQUIRE'S PEW.

A slanting ray of evening light
Shoots through the yellow pane;
It makes the faded crimson bright,
And gilds the fringe again;
The window's gothic framework falls
In oblique shadow on the walls.

And since those trappings first were new,
How many a cloudless day,
To rob the velvet of its hue,
Has come and passed away;
How many a setting sun hath made
That curious lattice-work of shade!

Crumbled beneath the hillock green
The cunning hand must be,
That carved this fretted door, I ween,
Acorn, and *fleur-de-lis;*
And now the worm hath done her part
In mimicking the chisel's art.

In days of yore (as now we call)
When the first *James* was king,
The courtly knight from yonder hall
Hither his train did bring;
All seated round in order due,
With broidered suit and buckled shoe.

On damask cushions, set in fringe,
All reverently they knelt:
Prayer-books, with brazen hasp and hinge,
In ancient English spelt,
Each holding in a lily hand,
Responsive at the priest's command.

Now, streaming down the vaulted aisle,
The sunbeam, long and lone,
Illumes the characters awhile
Of their inscription-stone;
And there, in marble hard and cold,
The knight and all his train behold.

Outstretched together, are expressed
He and my lady fair;
With hands uplifted on the breast,
In attitude of prayer;
Long-visaged, clad in armor, he, —
With ruffled arm and bodice, she.

Set forth in order ere they died,
The numerous offspring bend;
Devoutly kneeling side by side,
As though they did intend
For past omissions to atone,
By saying endless prayers in stone.

These mellow days are past and dim,
  But generations new,
In regular descent from him,
  Have filled the stately pew;
And in the same succession go,
To occupy the vault below.

And now, the polished, modern squire
  And his gay train appear,
Who duly to the hall retire,
  A season, every year,—
And fill the seats with belle and beau,
As 'twas so many years ago.

Perchance, all thoughtless as they tread
  The hollow sounding floor,
Of that dark house of kindred dead,
  Which shall, as heretofore,
In turn, receive, to silent rest,
Another, and another guest,—

The feathered hearse and sable train,
  In all its wonted state,
Shall wind along the village lane,
  And stand before the gate;
Brought many a distant country through,
To join the final rendezvous.

And when the race is swept away,
  All to their dusty beds,
Still shall the mellow evening ray
  Shine gayly o'er their heads;
While other faces, fresh and new,
Shall occupy the squire's pew.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

COUPLETS FROM "LOCKSLEY HALL."

LOVE took up the glass of Time, and turned it in his glowing hands:
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands.

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might:
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight.

. . . .

As the husband is, the wife is: thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down.

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse.

. . . .

Comfort? comfort scorned of devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things.

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, when the rain is on the roof.

. . . .

Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range,
Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change.

Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day:
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.

[*From In Memoriam.*]

STRONG SON OF GOD.

STRONG Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these orbs of light and shade;
Thou madest life in man and brute,
Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made.

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:
Thou madest man, he knows not why;
He thinks he was not made to die;
And thou hast made him: thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou:
Our wills are ours, we know not how;
Our wills are ours, to make them thine.

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

We have but faith: we cannot know;
For knowledge is of things we see:
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell:
That mind and soul according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster. We are fools and slight:
We mock thee when we do not fear:
But help thy foolish ones to bear;
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light.

Forgive what seemed my sin in me:
What seemed my worth since I began;
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee.

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair,
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved.

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth:
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise.

[*From In Memoriam.*]

HOPE FOR ALL.

OH, yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood:

That nothing walks, with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete:

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivelled in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold we know not anything:
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last — far-off — at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream: but what am I?
An infant crying in the night:
An infant crying for the light:
And with no language but a cry.

. . . . . .

The wish, that of the living whole
No life may fail beyond the grave
Derives it not from what we have
The likest God within the soul?

Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life;

That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,

I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope through darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

[*From In Memoriam.*]

SOUL TO SOUL.

I SHALL not see thee. Dare I say
No spirit ever brake the band
That stays him from the native land,
Where first he walked when claspt in clay?

No visual shade of some one lost,
But he, the Spirit himself, may come
Where all the nerve of sense is numb
Spirit to spirit, ghost to ghost.

Oh, therefore from thy sightless range
With gods in unconjectured bliss,
Oh, from the distance of the abyss
Of tenfold complicated change,

Descend, and touch, and enter: hear
The wish too strong for words to name;
That in this blindness of the frame
My ghost may feel that thine is near.

[*From In Memoriam.*]

CONDITION OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold,
Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communion with the dead.

In vain shalt thou, or any, call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except, like them, thou too canst say,
My spirit is at peace with all.

They haunt the silence of the breast,
Imagination calm and fair,
The memory like a cloudless air,
The conscience as a sea at rest:

But when the heart is full of din,
And Doubt beside the portal waits,
They can but listen at the gates,
And hear the household jar within.

[*From In Memoriam.*]

FAITH IN DOUBT.

PERPLEXT in faith, but pure in deeds,
At last he beat his music out.
There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

He fought his doubts and gathered strength,
He would not make his judgment blind,
He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them: thus he came at length

To find a stronger faith his own:
And Power was with him in the night,
Which makes the darkness and the light,
And dwells not in the light alone.

But in the darkness and the cloud,
As over Sinai's peaks of old,
While Israel made their gods of gold,
Although the trumpet blew so loud.

[*From In Memoriam.*]

TO A FRIEND IN HEAVEN.

Dear friend, far off, my lost desire,
So far, so near in woe and weal:
O loved the most, when most I feel
There is a lower and a higher;

Known and unknown: human, divine:
Sweet human hand and lips and eye:
Dear heavenly friend that canst not die,
Mine, mine, forever, ever mine;

Strange friend, past, present, and to be:
Love deeplier, darklier understood:
Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee.

Thy voice is on the rolling air:
I hear thee where the waters run;
Thou standest in the rising sun,
And in the setting thou art fair.

What art thou then? I cannot guess;
But though I seem in star and flower
To feel thee some diffusive power,
I do not therefore love thee less:

My love involves the love before:
My love is vaster passion now;
Though mixed with God and Nature thou,
I seem to love thee more and more.

Far off thou art, but ever nigh:
I have thee still, and I rejoice:
I prosper, circled with thy voice:
I shall not lose thee though I die

[*From In Memoriam.*]

RING OUT, WILD BELLS.

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky.
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more:
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife:
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times:
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite:
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease:
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand:
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

[*From The Princess.*]

TEARS, IDLE TEARS.

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more.

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the underworld,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge:
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square:
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others: deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret:
O Death in Life, the days that are no more.

[*From The Princess.*]

FOR HIS CHILD'S SAKE.

Home they brought her warrior dead:
She nor swooned, nor uttered cry:
All her maidens, watching, said,
"She must weep or she will die."

Then they praised him, soft and low,
Called him worthy to be loved,
Truest friend and noblest foe:
Yet she neither spoke nor moved.

Stole a maiden from her place.
Lightly to the warrior stept,
Took the face-cloth from the face:
Yet she neither moved nor wept.

Rose a nurse of ninety years,
Set his child upon her knee —
Like summer tempest came her tears —
"Sweet my child, I live for thee."

[*From The Princess.*]

RECONCILIATION.

As through the land at eve we went,
And plucked the ripest ears,
We fell out, my wife and I,
Oh, we fell out, I know not why,
And kissed again with tears.

For when we came where lies the child
We lost in other years,
There above the little grave,
Oh, there above the little grave,
We kissed again with tears.

[*From The Princess.*]

BUGLE SONG.

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle: answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

Oh, hark, oh, hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
Oh, sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!

Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle: answer echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

[From The Princess.]

NOW LIES THE EARTH.

Now lies the Earth all Danaë to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me.

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me.

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake:
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me.

[From The Princess.]

MAN AND WOMAN.

For woman is not undeveloped man,
But diverse: could we make her as the man,
Sweet love were slain: his dearest bond is this,
Not like to like, but like in difference.
Yet in the long years liker must they grow:
The man be more of woman, she of man:
He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;
She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,
Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
Till at the last she set herself to man,
Like perfect music unto noble words:
And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time.
Sit side by side, full-summed in all their powers,
Dispensing harvest, sowing the To-be,
Self-reverent each and reverencing each,
Distinct in individualities,
But like each other even as those who love.

[From The Princess.]

CRADLE SONG.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go,
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me:
While my little one, while my pretty one sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon:
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon;
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west
Under the silver moon:
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep,

[From The Princess.]

ASK ME NO MORE.

Ask me no more: the moon may draw the sea;
The cloud may stoop from heaven and take the shape,
With fold to fold, of mountain or of cape:
But O too fond, when have I answered thee?
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: What answer should I give?
I love not hollow cheek or faded eye:
Yet, O my friend, I will not have thee die!
Ask me no more, lest I should bid thee live:
Ask me no more.

Ask me no more: thy fate and mine are sealed:
I strove against the stream and all in vain:
Let the great river take me to the main:
No more, dear love, for at a touch I yield:
Ask me no more.

[*From The Miller's Daughter.*]

LOVE.

Love that hath us in the net,
Can he pass, and we forget?
Many suns arise and set.
Many a chance the years beget.
Love the gift is Love the debt,
Even so.

Love is hurt with jar and fret.
Love is made a vague regret.
Eyes with idle tears are wet.
Idle habit links us yet.
What is love? for we forget:
Ah, no! no!

[*From The Miller's Daughter.*]

HUSBAND TO WIFE.

Look through mine eyes with thine. True wife,
Round my true heart thine arms entwine:
My other dearer life in life,
Look through my very soul with thine!
Untouched with any shade of years,
May those kind eyes forever dwell!
They have not shed a many tears,
Dear eyes, since first I knew them well.

Yet tears they shed: they had their part
Of sorrow: for when time was ripe,
The still affection of the heart
Became an outward breathing type,
That into stillness passed again,
And left a want unknown before:
Although the loss that brought us pain,
That loss but made us love the more,

With farther lookings on. The kiss,
The woven arms, seem but to be
Weak symbols of the settled bliss,
The comfort, I have found in thee:
But that God bless thee, dear — who wrought
Two spirits to one equal mind —
With blessings beyond hope or thought,
With blessings which no words can find.

Arise, and let us wander forth,
To yon old mill across the wolds;
For look, the sunset, south and north,
Winds all the vale in rosy folds,
And fires your narrow casement glass,
Touching the sullen pool below:
On the chalk-hill the bearded grass
Is dry and dewless, let us go.

[*From The Miller's Daughter.*]

WHAT I WOULD BE.

It is the miller's daughter,
And she is grown so dear, so dear,
That I would be the jewel
That trembles at her ear:
For hid in ringlets day and night,
I'd touch her neck so warm and white.

And I would be the girdle
About her dainty, dainty waist,
And her heart would beat against me,
In sorrow and in rest:
And I should know if it beat right,
I'd clasp it round so close and tight.

And I would be the necklace,
And all day long to fall and rise
Upon her balmy bosom,
With her laughter or her sighs,
And I would lie so light, so light,
I scarce should be unclasped at night.

[*From Merlin and Vivien.*]

NOT AT ALL, OR ALL IN ALL.

In Love, if Love be Love, if Love be ours,
Faith and unfaith can ne'er be equal powers;
Unfaith in aught is want of faith in all.

It is the little rift within the lute,
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening slowly silence all.

The little rift within the lover's lute
Or little pitted speck in garnered fruit,
That rotting inward, slowly moulders all.

It is not worth the keeping: let it go:
But shall it? answer, darling, answer, no.
And trust me not at all or all in all.

[*From Maud.*]

GARDEN SONG.

Come into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone:
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the roses blown.

For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun that she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon:
All night has the casement jessamine stirred
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
"Forever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clashed in the hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake,
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sighed for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near;"
And the white rose weeps, "She is late;"
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear;"
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her, and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed.
My dust would hear her, and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead:
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

[*From Maud.*]

GO NOT, HAPPY DAY.

Go not, happy day,
From the shining fields,
Go not, happy day,
Till the maiden yields.
Rosy is the West,
Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth.
When the happy Yes
Falters from her lips,
Pass and blush the news
O'er the blowing ships,
Over blowing seas,
Over seas at rest,
Pass the happy news,
Blush it through the West,
Till the red man dance
By his red cedar-tree.
And the red man's babe
Leap, beyond the sea.
Blush from West to East,
Blush from East to West,
Till the West is East,
Blush it through the West.
Rosy is the West,
Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
And a rose her mouth.

[*From Guinevere.*]

THE NUNS' SONG.

Late, late, so late! and dark the night and chill!
Late, late, so late! but we can enter still.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

No light had we: for that we do repent:
And learning this, the bridegroom will relent.
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

No light: so late! and dark and chill the night;
Oh, let us in, that we may find the light!
Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now.

Have we not heard the bridegroom is so sweet?
Oh, let us in, though late, to kiss his feet!
No, no, too late! ye cannot enter now.

THE DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

FULL knee-deep lies the winter snow,
And the winter winds are wearily sighing:
Toll ye the church-bell sad and slow,
And tread softly and speak low,
For the old year lies a-dying.
Old year, you must not die:
You came to us so readily,
You lived with us so steadily,
Old year, you shall not die.

He lieth still; he doth not move;
He will not see the dawn of day.
He hath no other life above;
He gave me a friend, and a true, true-love.
And the new year will take 'em away.
Old year, you must not go:
So long as you have been with us,
Such joy as you have seen with us,
Old year, you shall not go.

He frothed his bumpers to the brim;
A jollier year we shall not see;
But though his eyes are waxing dim,
And though his foes speak ill of him,
He was a friend to me.
Old year; you shall not die:
We did so laugh and cry with you,
I've half a mind to die with you,
Old year, if you must die.

He was full of joke and jest,
But all his merry quips are o'er.
To see him die across the waste
His son and heir doth ride post-haste,
But he'll be dead before.
Every one for his own.
The night is starry and cold, my friend,
And the new year, blithe and bold, my friend,
Comes up to take his own.

How hard he breathes! over the snow
I heard just now the crowing cock.
The shadows flicker to and fro:
The cricket chirps: the light burns low:
'Tis nearly twelve o'clock.
Shake hands before you die.
Old year, we'll dearly rue for you:
What is it we can do for you?
Speak out before you die.

His face is growing sharp and thin.
Alack! our friend is gone.
Close up his eyes: tie up his chin:
Step from the corpse, and let him in
That standeth there alone,
And waiteth at the door.
There's a new foot on the floor, my friend,
And a new face at the door, my friend,
A new face at the door.

A WELCOME TO ALEXANDRA.

SEA-KINGS' daughter from over the sea,
Alexandra!
Saxon and Norman and Dane are we,
But all of us Danes in our welcome of thee,
Alexandra!
Welcome her, thunders of fort and of fleet!
Welcome her, thundering cheer of the street!
Welcome her, all things youthful and sweet,
Scatter the blossom under her feet!
Break, happy land, into earlier flowers!
Make music, O bird, in the new-budded bowers!
Blazon your mottoes of blessing and prayer!
Welcome her, welcome her, all that is ours!
Warble, O bugle, and trumpet, blare!
Flags, flutter out upon turrets and towers!
Flames, on the windy headland flare!
Utter your jubilee, steeple and spire!
Clash, ye bells, in the merry March air!
Flash, ye cities, in rivers of fire!
Rush to the roof, sudden rocket, and higher
Melt into the stars for the land's desire!
Roll and rejoice, jubilant voice,
Roll as a ground-swell dashed on the strand,
Roar as the sea when he welcomes the land,

And welcome her, welcome the land's desire,
The sea-kings' daughter, as happy as fair,
Blissful bride of a blissful heir,
Bride of the heir of the kings of the sea —
O joy to the people, and joy to the throne,
Come to us, love us, and make us your own,
For Saxon or Dane or Norman we,
Teuton or Celt or whatever we be,
We are each all Dane in our welcome of thee,
Alexandra!

LADY CLARA VERE DE VERE.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Of me you shall not win renown:
You thought to break a country heart
For pastime, ere you went to town.
At me you smiled, but unbeguiled
I saw the snare, and I retired:
The daughter of a hundred earls,
You are not one to be desired.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
I know you proud to bear your name,
Your pride is yet no mate for mine,
Too proud to care from whence I came.
Nor would I break for your sweet sake
A heart that doats on truer charms.
A simple maiden in her flower
Is worth a hundred coats of arms.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
Some meeker pupil you must find
For were you queen of all that is,
I could not stoop to such a mind.
You sought to prove how I could love,
And my disdain is my reply.
The lion on your old stone gates
Is not more cold to you than I.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
You put strange memories in my head;
Nor thrice your branching limes have blown
Since I beheld young Laurence dead.
Oh, your sweet eyes, your low replies:
A great enchantress you may be:
But there was that across his throat
Which you had hardly cared to see.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
When thus he met his mother's view,
She had the passions of her kind,
She spake some certain truths of you.
Indeed I heard one bitter word
That scarce is fit for you to hear:
Her manners had not that repose
Which stamps the caste of Vere de Vere.

Lady Clara Vere de Vere,
There stands a spectre in your hall:
The guilt of blood is at your door:
You changed a wholesome heart to gall.
You held your course without remorse,
To make him trust his modest worth,
And, last, you fixed a vacant stare,
And slew him with your noble birth.

Trust me, Clara Vere de Vere,
From yon blue heavens above us bent
The grand old gardener and his wife
Smile at the claims of long descent.
Howe'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

I know you, Clara Vere de Vere,
You pine among your halls and towers:
The languid light of your proud eyes
Is wearied of the rolling hours.

In glowing health, with boundless wealth,
But sickening of a vague disease,
You know so ill to deal with time,
You needs must play such pranks as these.

Clara, Clara Vere de Vere,
If Time be heavy on your hands,
Are there no beggars at your gate,
Nor any poor about your lands?
Oh! teach the orphan-boy to read,
Or teach the orphan-girl to sew,
Pray Heaven for a human heart,
And let the foolish yeoman go.

CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward, the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!" he said.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismayed?
Not though the soldiers knew
Some one had blundered:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die,
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered:
Plunged in the battery-smoke,
Right through the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre-stroke
Shattered and sundered.
Then they rode back, but not,
Not the six hundred.

Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them,
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?
Oh, the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honor the charge they made!
Honor the Light Brigade!
Noble six hundred!

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK.

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me.

Oh, well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
Oh, well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill:
But oh, for the touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me.

MOVE EASTWARD, HAPPY EARTH.

Move eastward, happy earth, and leave
Yon orange sunset waning slow:
From fringes of the faded eve,
O happy planet, eastward go:
Till over thy dark shoulder glow,
Thy silver-sister world, and rise
To glass herself in dewy eyes
That watch me from the glen below.

Ah, bear me with thee, lightly borne,
Dip forward under starry light,
And move me to my marriage-morn,
And round again to happy night.

THE TEARS OF HEAVEN.

Heaven weeps above the earth all night till morn,
In darkness weeps as all ashamed to weep,
Because the earth hath made her state forlorn
With self-wrought evil of unnumbered years,
And doth the fruit of her dishonor reap.
And all the day heaven gathers back her tears
Into her own blue eyes so clear and deep,
And showering down the glory of lightsome day,
Smiles on the earth's worn brow to win her if she may.

COME NOT WHEN I AM DEAD.

Come not when I am dead,
To drop thy foolish tears upon my grave,
To trample round my fallen head,
And vex the unhappy dust thou wouldst not save.
There let the wind sweep and the plover cry;
But thou go by.

Child, if it were thine error or thy crime
I care no longer, being all unblest
Wed whom thou wilt, but I am sick of Time,
And I desire to rest.
Pass on, weak heart, and leave me where I lie:
Go by, go by.

CIRCUMSTANCE.

Two children in two neighbor villages
Playing mad pranks along the healthy leas:
Two strangers meeting at a festival:
Two lovers whispering by an orchard wall:
Two lives bound fast in one with golden ease:
Two graves grass-green beside a gray church-tower
Washed with still rains and daisy-blossomed;
Two children in one hamlet born and bred:
So runs the round of life from hour to hour.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

AT THE CHURCH-GATE.

Although I enter not,
Yet round about the spot,
Ofttimes I hover;
And near the sacred gate,
With longing eyes I wait,
Expectant of her.

The minster-bell tolls out
Above the city's rout,
And noise and humming;
They've hushed the minster-bell,
The organ 'gins to swell,—
She's coming,—coming!

My lady comes at last,
Timid and stepping fast,
And hastening hither,
With modest eyes downcast;
She comes,—she's here,—she's past;
May heaven go with her!

Kneel undisturbed, fair saint,
Pour out your praise or plaint
Meekly and duly;
I will not enter there,
To sully your pure prayer,
With thoughts unruly.

But suffer me to pace
Round the forbidden place,
Lingering a minute,
Like outcast spirits who wait,
And see, through heaven's gate,
Angels within it.

CELIA THAXTER.

FAREWELL.

The crimson sunset faded into gray;
Upon the murmurous sea the twilight fell;
The last warm breath of the delicious day
Passed with a mute farewell.

Above my head, in the soft purple sky,
A wild note sounded like a shrill-voiced bell;
Three gulls met, wheeled, and parted with a cry
That seemed to say, "Farewell!"

I watched them; one sailed east, and one soared west,
And one went floating south; while like a knell
That mournful cry the empty sky possessed,
"Farewell, farewell, farewell!"

"Farewell!" I thought, it is the earth's one speech;
All human voices the sad chorus swell;
Though mighty love to heaven's high gate may reach,
Yet must he say, "Farewell!"

The rolling world is girdled with the sound,
Perpetually breathed from all who dwell
Upon its bosom, for no place is found
Where is not heard, "Farewell!"

"Farewell, farewell!"—from wave to wave 't is tossed,
From wind to wind: earth has one tale to tell;
All other sounds are dulled and drowned and lost
In this one cry, "Farewell!"

DISCONTENT.

There is no day so dark
But through the murk some ray of hope may steal,
Some blessèd touch from heaven that we might feel,
If we but chose to mark.

We shut the portals fast,
And turn the key and let no sunshine in;
Yet to the worst despair that comes through sin
God's light shall reach at last.

We slight our daily joy,
Make much of our vexations, thickly set
Our path with thorns of discontent, and fret
At our fine gold's alloy,

Till bounteous heaven might frown
At such ingratitude, and, turning, lay
On our impatience, burdens that would weigh
Our aching shoulders down.

We shed too many tears,
And sigh too sore, and yield us up to woe,
As if God had not planned the way we go
And counted out our years.

Can we not be content,
And lift our foreheads from the ignoble dust
Of these complaining lives, and wait with trust,
Fulfilling heaven's intent?

Must we have wealth and power,
Fame, beauty, all things ordered to our mind?
Nay, all these things leave happiness behind!
Accept the sun and shower,

The humble joys that bless,
Appealing to indifferent hearts and cold
With delicate touch, striving to reach and hold
Our hidden consciousness;

And see how everywhere
Love comforts, strengthens, helps, and saves us all;
What opportunities of good befall
To make life sweet and fair!

THE SUNRISE NEVER FAILED US YET.

Upon the sadness of the sea
The sunset broods regretfully;
From the far lonely spaces, slow
Withdraws the wistful afterglow.

So out of life the splendor dies;
So darken all the happy skies;
So gathers twilight, cold and stern;
But overhead the planets burn;

And up the east another day
Shall chase the bitter dark away;
What though our eyes with tears be wet?
The sunrise never failed us yet.

The blush of dawn may yet restore
Our light and hope and joy once more
Sad soul, take comfort, nor forget
That sunrise never failed us yet!

A MUSSEL-SHELL.

Why art thou colored like the evening sky
Sorrowing for sunset? Lovely dost thou lie,
Bared by the washing of the eager brine,
At the snow's motionless and wind-carved line.

Cold stretch the snows, cold throng the waves, the wind
Stings sharp,— an icy fire, a touch unkind,—
And sighs as if with passion of regret,
The while I mark thy tints of violet.

O beauty strange! O shape of perfect grace,
Whereon the lovely waves of color trace
The history of the years that passed thee by,
And touched thee with the pathos of the sky!

The sea shall crush thee; yea, the ponderous wave
Up the loose beach shall grind, and scoop thy grave,
Thou thought of God! What more than thou am I?
Both transient as the sad wind's passing sigh.

REVERIE.

The white reflection of the sloop's great sail
Sleeps trembling on the tide,
In scarlet trim her crew lean o'er the rail,
Lounging on either side.

Pale blue and streaked with pearl the waters lie,
And glitter in the heat;
The distance gathers purple bloom where sky
And glimmering coast-line meet.

From the cove's curving rim of sandy gray
The ebbing tide has drained,
Where, mournful, in the dusk of yesterday
The curlew's voice complained.

Half lost in hot mirage the sails afar
Lie dreaming, still and white;
No wave breaks, no wind breathes, the peace to mar,
Summer is at its height.

How many thousand summers thus have shone
Across the ocean waste,
Passing in swift succession, one by one
By the fierce winter chased!

The gray rocks blushing soft at dawn and eve,
The green leaves at their feet,
The dreaming sails, the crying birds that grieve,
Ever themselves repeat.

And yet how dear and how forever fair
Is Nature's friendly face,
And how forever new and sweet and rare
Each old familiar grace!

What matters it that she will sing and smile
When we are dead and still?
Let us be happy in her beauty while
Our hearts have power to thrill.

Let us rejoice in every moment bright,
Grateful that it is ours;
Bask in her smiles with ever fresh delight,
And gather all her flowers;

For presently we part: what will avail
Her rosy fires of dawn,
Her noontide pomps, to us, who fade and fail,
Our hands from hers withdrawn?

LOVE SHALL SAVE US ALL.

O PILGRIM, comes the night so fast?
Let not the dark thy heart appall,
Though loom the shadows vague and vast,
For love shall save us all.

There is no hope but this to see
Through tears that gather fast, and fall;
Too great to perish love must be,
And love shall save us all.

Have patience with our loss and pain,
Our troubled space of days so small;
We shall not reach our arms in vain,
For love shall save us all.

O pilgrim, but a moment wait,
And we shall hear our darlings call
Beyond death's mute and awful gate,
And love shall save us all!

TO A VIOLIN.

WHAT wondrous power from heaven upon thee wrought?
What prisoned Ariel within thee broods?
Marvel of human skill and human thought,
Light as a dry leaf in the winter woods!

Thou mystic thing, all beautiful! What mind
Conceived thee, what intelligence began
And out of chaos thy rare shape designed,
Thou delicate and perfect work of man?

Across my hands thou liest mute and still;
Thou wilt not breathe to me thy secret fine;
Thy matchless tones the eager air shall thrill
To no entreaty or command of mine;

But comes thy master, lo! thou yieldest all:
Passion and pathos, rapture and despair;
To the soul's need thy searching voice doth call
In language exquisite beyond compare,

Till into speech articulate at last
Thou seem'st to break, and thy charmed listener hears
Thee waking echoes of the vanished past,
Touching the source of gladness and of tears;

And with bowed head he lets the sweet wave roll
Across him, swayed by that weird power of thine,
And reverence and wonder fill his soul
That man's creation should be so divine.

COURAGE.

Because I hold it sinful to despond,
And will not let the bitterness of life
Blind me with burning tears, but look beyond
Its tumult and its strife;

Because I lift my head above the mist,
Where the sun shines and the broad breezes blow,
By every ray and every rain-drop kissed
That God's love doth bestow;

Think you I find no bitterness at all?
No burden to be borne, like Christian's pack?
Think you there are no ready tears to fall
Because I keep them back?

Why should I hug life's ills with cold reserve,
To curse myself and all who love me? Nay!
A thousand times more good than I deserve
God gives me every day.

And in each one of these rebellious tears
Kept bravely back, He makes a rainbow shine;
Grateful I take His slightest gift, no fears
Nor any doubts are mine.

Dark skies must clear, and when the clouds are past,
One golden day redeems a weary year;
Patient I listen, sure that sweet at last
Will sound his voice of cheer.

Then vex me not with chiding. Let me be.
I must be glad and grateful to the end;
I grudge you not your cold and darkness,—me
The powers of light befriend.

IN KITTERY CHURCHYARD.

Crushing the scarlet strawberries in the grass,
I kneel to read the slanting stone. Alas!
How sharp a sorrow speaks! A hundred years
And more have vanished, with their smiles and tears,
Since here was laid, upon an April day,
Sweet Mary Chauncy in the grave away,—

A hundred years since here her lover stood
Beside her grave in such despairing mood,
And yet from out the vanished past I hear
His cry of anguish sounding deep and clear,
And all my heart with pity melts, as though
To-day's bright sun were looking on his woe.
"Of such a wife, O righteous heaven! bereft,
What joy for me, what joy on earth is left?
Still from my inmost soul the groans arise,
Still flow the sorrows ceaseless from mine eyes."
Alas, poor tortured soul! I look away
From the dark stone,—how brilliant shines the day!
A low wall, over which the roses shed
Their perfumed petals, shuts the quiet dead
Apart a little, and the tiny square
Stands in the broad and laughing field so fair,
And gay green vines climb o'er the rough stone wall,
And all about the wild-birds flit and call,
And but a stone's-throw southward, the blue sea
Rolls sparkling in and sings incessantly.
Lovely as any dream the peaceful place,
And scarcely changed since on her gentle face
For the last time on that sad April day
He gazed, and felt, for him, all beauty lay
Buried with her forever. Dull to him
Looked the bright world through eyes with tears so dim!
"I soon shall follow the same dreary way
That leads and opens to the coasts of day."
His only hope! But when slow time had dealt
Firmly with him and kindly, and he felt
The storm and stress of strong and piercing pain
Yielding at last, and he grew calm again,
Doubtless he found another mate before
He followed Mary to the happy shore!
But none the less his grief appeals to me
Who sit and listen to the singing sea
This matchless summer day, beside the stone
He made to echo with his bitter moan,
And in my eyes I feel the foolish tears
For buried sorrow, dead a hundred years!

BEETHOVEN.

O SOVEREIGN Master! stern and splendid power,
  That calmly dost both time and death defy;
Lofty and lone as mountain peaks that tower,
  Leading our thoughts up to the eternal sky:
Keeper of some divine, mysterious key,
  Raising us far above all human care,
Unlocking awful gates of harmony
  To let heaven's light in on the world's despair;
Smiter of solemn chords that still command
  Echoes in souls that suffer and aspire,
In the great moment while we hold thy hand,
  Baptized with pain and rapture, tears and fire,
God lifts our saddened foreheads from the dust,
The everlasting God, in whom we trust!

THE SANDPIPER.

Across the narrow beach we flit,
One little sandpiper and I
And fast I gather, bit by bit,
The scattered driftwood bleached and dry
The wild waves reach their hands for it,
The wild wind raves, the tide runs high,
As up and down the beach we flit,—
One little sandpiper and I.

Above our heads the sullen clouds
Scud black and swift across the sky;
Like silent ghosts in misty shrouds
Stand out the white lighthouses high.
Almost as far as eye can reach
I see the close-reefed vessels fly,
As fast we flit along the beach,—
One little sandpiper and I.

I watch him as he skims along
Uttering his sweet and mournful cry;
He starts not at my fitful song,
Or flash of fluttering drapery;
He has no thought of any wrong,
He scans me with a fearless eye;
Stanch friends are we, well tried and strong,
The little sandpiper and I.

Comrade, where wilt thou be to-night
When the loosed storm breaks furiously?
My driftwood fire will burn so bright!
To what warm shelter canst thou fly?
I do not fear for thee, though wroth
The tempest rushes through the sky:
For are we not God's children both,
Thou, little sandpiper, and I?

JAMES THOMSON.

[*From The Seasons.*]

PURE AND HAPPY LOVE.

But happy they! the happiest of their kind!
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.
'Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
Unnatural oft, and foreign to the mind,
That binds their peace, but harmony itself,
Attuning all their passions into love;
Where Friendship full-exerts her softest power,
Perfect esteem enlivened by desire
Ineffable, and sympathy of soul;
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
With boundless confidence: for nought but love
Can answer love, and render bliss secure.

[*From The Seasons.*]

THE TEMPEST.

Unusual darkness broods; and growing, gains
The full possession of the sky, surcharged
With wrathful vapor, from the secret beds,
Where sleep the mineral generations, drawn.
Thence nitre, sulphur, and the fiery spume
Of fat bitumen, steaming on the day,
With various-tinctured trains of latent flame,
Pollute the sky, and in yon baleful cloud,
A reddening gloom, a magazine of fate,
Ferment; till, by the touch ethereal roused,
The dash of clouds, or irritating war
Of fighting winds, while all is calm below,

They furious spring. A boding silence reigns,
Dread through the dun expanse; save the dull sound
That from the mountain, previous to the storm,
Rolls o'er the muttering earth, disturbs the flood,
And shakes the forest-leaf without a breath.
Prone, to the lowest vale, the aërial tribes
Descend: the tempest-loving raven scarce
Dares wing the dubious dusk. In rueful gaze
The cattle stand, and on the scowling heavens
Cast a deploring eye; by man forsook,
Who to the crowded cottage hies him fast,
Or seeks the shelter of the downward cave.
'Tis listening fear, and dumb amazement all:
When to the startled eye the sudden glance
Appears far south, eruptive through the cloud;
And following slower, in explosion vast,
The thunder raises his tremendous voice.
At first, heard solemn o'er the verge of heaven,
The tempest growls; but as it nearer comes,
And rolls its awful burden on the wind,
The lightnings flash a larger curve, and more
The noise astounds: till overhead a sheet
Of livid flame discloses wide, then shuts,
And opens wider; shuts and opens still
Expansive, wrapping ether in a blaze.
Follows the loosened aggravated roar,
Enlarging, deepening, mingling, peal on peal
Crushed horrible, convulsing heaven and earth.
Down comes a deluge of sonorous hail,
Or prone-descending rain. Wide rent, the clouds
Pour a whole flood; and yet its flame unquenched,
The unconquerable lightning struggles through,
Ragged and fierce, or in red whirling balls,
And fires the mountains with redoubled rage.

[*From The Seasons.*]

HARVEST-TIME.

A SERENER blue,
With golden light enlivened, wide invests
The happy world. Attempered suns arise,
Sweet-beamed, and shedding oft through lucid clouds
A pleasing calm; while broad and brown, below
Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
Rich, silent, deep, they stand; for not a gale
Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain:
A calm of plenty! till the ruffled air
Falls from its poise, and gives the breeze to blow.
Rent is the fleecy mantle of the sky;
The clouds fly different; and the sudden sun
By fits effulgent gilds the illumined field,
And black by fits the shadows sweep along.
A gaily-chequered heart-expanding view,
Far as the circling eye can shoot around,
Unbounded tossing in a flood of corn.
These are thy blessings, industry! rough power!
Whom labor still attends, and sweat, and pain;
Yet the kind source of every gentle art,
And all the soft civility of life.

[*From The Seasons.*]

BIRDS, AND THEIR LOVES.

WHEN first the soul of love is sent abroad
Warm through the vital air, and on the heart
Harmonious seizes, the gay troops begin,
In gallant thought, to plume the painted wing;
And try again the long-forgotten strain,
At first faint-warbled. But no sooner grows
The soft infusion prevalent, and wide,
Than, all alive, at once their joy o'erflows
In music unconfined. Upsprings the lark,
Shrill-voiced, and loud, the messenger of morn;
Ere yet the shadows fly, he mounted sings
Amid the dawning clouds, and from their haunts
Calls up the tuneful nations. Every copse
Deep-tangled, tree irregular, and bush
Bending with dewy moisture, o'er the heads
Of the coy quiristers that lodge within,
Are prodigal of harmony. The thrush
And wood-lark, o'er the kind-contending throng
Superior heard, run through the sweetest length
Of notes; when listening Philomela deigns
To let them joy, and purposes, in thought
Elate, to make her night excel their day.
The blackbird whistles from the thorny brake;
The mellow bullfinch answers from the grove:
Nor are the linnets, o'er the flowering furze
Poured out profusely, silent. Joined to these
Innumerous songsters, in the freshening shade
Of new-sprung leaves their modulations mix
Mellifluous. The jay, the rook, the daw,
And each harsh pipe, discordant heard alone,
Aid the full concert: while the stock-dove breathes
A melancholy murmur through the whole.
'Tis love creates their melody, and all
This waste of music is the voice of love,
That even to birds, and beasts, the tender arts
Of pleasing, teaches. Hence, the glossy kind
Try every winning way inventive love
Can dictate, and in courtship to their mates
Pour forth their little souls. First, wide around,
With distant awe, in airy rings they rove,
Endeavoring by a thousand tricks to catch
The cunning, conscious, half-averted glance
Of their regardless charmer. Should she seem
Softening the least approvance to bestow,
Their colors burnish, and by hope inspired,
They brisk advance; then, on a sudden struck,
Retire disordered; then again approach;
In fond rotation spread the spotted wing,
And shiver every feather with desire.

[*From The Seasons.*]

DEATH AMID THE SNOWS.

ALL winter drives along the darkened air:
In his own loose revolving fields, the swain
Disastered stands; sees other hills ascend.
Of unknown joyless brow; and other scenes

Of horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain;
Nor finds the river, nor the forest, hid
Beneath the formless wild; but wanders on
From hill to dale, still more and more astray;
Impatient flouncing through the drifted heaps,
Stung with the thoughts of home; the thoughts of home
Rush on his nerves, and call their vigor forth
In many a vain attempt. How sinks his soul!
What black despair, what horror fills his heart!
When for the dusky spot, which fancy feigned
His tufted cottage rising through the snow,
He meets the roughness of the middle waste,
Far from the track and blest abode of man;
While round him night, resistless, closes fast,
And every tempest, howling o'er his head,
Renders the savage wilderness more wild.
Then throng the busy shapes into his mind,
Of covered pits, unfathomably deep,
A dire descent! beyond the power of frost;
Of faithless bogs; of precipices huge,
Smoothed up with snow; and, what is land, unknown,
What water, of the still unfrozen spring,
In the loose marsh or solitary lake,
Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils.
These check his fearful steps; and down he sinks,
Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death;
Mixed with the tender anguish nature shoots
Through the wrung bosom of the dying man,
His wife, his children, and his friends unseen.
In vain for him the officious wife prepares
The fire fair-blazing, and the vestment warm;
In vain his little children, peeping out
Into the mingling storm, demand their sire,
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
Nor wife, nor children more shall he behold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home. On every nerve
The deadly winter seizes; shuts up sense;
And, o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold,
Lays him along the snows, a stiffened corse,
Stretched out, and bleaching in the northern blast.

[*From Liberty.*]

INDEPENDENCE.

Hail! Independence, hail! Heaven's next best gift,
To that of life and an immortal soul!
The life of life! that to the banquet high
And sober meal gives taste; to the bowed roof
Fair-dreamed repose, and to the cottage charms.

[*From Liberty.*]

A STATE'S NEED OF VIRTUE.

. . . . Virtue! without thee,
There is no ruling eye, no nerve, in states;
War has no vigor, and no safety, peace:
E'en justice warps to party, laws oppress,
Wide through the land their weak protection fails,
First broke the balance, and then scorned the sword.

[*From Liberty.*]

THE ZEAL OF PERSECUTION.

MOTHER of tortures! persecuting Zeal,
High flashing in her hand the ready torch,
Or poniard bathed in unbelieving blood;
Hell's fiercest fiend! of saintly brow demure,
Assuming a celestial seraph's name,
While she beneath the blasphemous pretence
Of pleasing Parent Heaven, the Source of Love,
Has wrought more horrors, more detested deeds,
Than all the rest combined!

[*From Liberty.*]

THE APOLLO, AND VENUS OF MEDICI.

ALL conquest-flushed, from prostrate Python, came
The quivered god. In graceful act he stands,
His arm extended with the slackened bow;
Light flows his easy robe, and fair displays
A manly softened form. The bloom of gods
Seems youthful o'er the beardless cheek to wave:
His features yet, heroic ardor warms;
And sweet subsiding to a native smile,
Mixed with the joy elating conquest gives,
A scattered frown exalts his matchless air.

. . . . .

The Queen of Love arose, as from the deep
She sprung in all the melting pomp of charms.
Bashful she bends, her well-taught look aside
Turns in enchanting guise, where dubious mix
Vain conscious beauty, a dissembled sense
Of modest shame, and slippery looks of love.
The gazer grows enamoured, and the stone,
As if exulting in its conquest, smiles.
So turned each limb, so swelled with softening art,
That the deluded eye the marble doubts.

[*From The Castle of Indolence.*]

REPOSE.

WHAT, what is virtue, but repose of mind,
A pure ethereal calm, that knows no storm;
Above the reach of wild ambition's wind,
Above those passions that this world deform,
And torture man, a proud malignant worm?
But here, instead, soft gales of passion play,
And gently stir the heart, thereby to form
A quicker sense of joy; as breezes stray
Across the enlivened skies, and make them still more gay.

The best of men have ever loved repose:
They hate to mingle in the filthy fray,
Where the soul sours, and gradual rancor grows,
Embittered more from peevish day to day.
E'en those whom fame has lent her fairest ray,
The most renowned of worthy wights of yore,
From a base world at last have stolen away:
So Scipio, to the soft Cumæan shore
Retiring, tasted joy he never knew before.

[*From The Castle of Indolence.*]

THE FOLLY OF HOARDING.

Oh, grievous folly! to heap up estate,
Losing the days you see beneath the sun;
When, sudden, comes blind unrelenting fate,
And gives the untasted portion you have won
With ruthless toil, and many a wretch undone,
To those who mock you, gone to Pluto's reign,
There with sad ghosts to pine, and shadows dun:
But sure it is of vanities most vain,
To toil for what you here untoiling may obtain.

[*From The Castle of Indolence.*]

EXCESS TO BE AVOIDED.

But not e'en pleasure to excess is good:
What most elates, then sinks the soul as low:
When springtide joy pours in with copious flood,
The higher still the exulting billows flow,
The further back again they flagging go,
And leave us grovelling on the dreary shore.

[*From The Castle of Indolence.*]

NATURE'S JOY INALIENABLE.

I care not, Fortune, what you me deny:
You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace;
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shows her brightening face;
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns, by living stream, at eve;
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the great children leave:
Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

[*From The Castle of Indolence.*]

THE STATE OF THE WORLD HAD MEN LIVED AT EASE.

Had unambitious mortals minded nought,
But in loose joy their time to wear away;
Had they alone the lap of dalliance sought,
Pleased on her pillow their dull heads to lay,
Rude nature's state had been our state to-day;
No cities e'er their towery fronts had raised,
No arts had made us opulent and gay;
With brother brutes the human race had grazed;
None e'er had soar'd to fame, none honored been, none praised.

Great Homer's song had never fired the breast
To thirst of glory, and heroic deeds;
Sweet Maro's muse, sunk in inglorious rest,
Had silent slept amid the Mincian reeds:
The wits of modern time had told their beads,
The monkish legends been their only strains;
Our Milton's Eden had lain wrapt in weeds,
Our Shakespeare strolled and laughed with Warwick swains,
Ne had my master Spenser charm'd his Mulla's plains.

[*From The Castle of Indolence.*]

HEALTH NECESSARY TO HAPPY LIFE.

Ah! what avail the largest gifts of Heaven,
When drooping health and spirits go amiss?
How tasteless then whatever can be given?
Health is the vital principle of bliss,
And exercise of health. In proof of this,
Behold the wretch, who slugs his life away,
Soon swallowed in disease's sad abyss;
While he whom toil has braced, or manly play,
As light as air each limb, each thought as clear as day.

Oh, who can speak the vigorous joys of health!
Unclogg'd the body, unobscured the mind:
The morning rises gay, with pleasing stealth,
The temperate evening falls serene and kind.
In health the wiser brutes true gladness find:
See! how the younglings frisk along the meads,
As May comes on, and wakes the balmy wind;
Rampant with life, their joy all joy exceeds;
Yet what but high-strung health this dancing pleasaunce breeds?

CONTENTMENT.

If those, who live in shepherd's bower,
  Press not the rich and stately bed:
The new-mown hay and breathing flower
  A softer couch beneath them spread.

If those, who sit at shepherd's board
  Soothe not their taste by wanton art;
They take what Nature's gifts afford,
  And take it with a cheerful heart.

If those who drain the shepherd's bowl,
  No high and sparkling wines can boast,
With wholesome cups they cheer the soul,
  And crown them with the village toast.

If those who join in shepherd's sport,
  Gay dancing on the daisied ground,
Have not the splendor of a court:
  Yet love adorns the merry round.

RULE, BRITANNIA!

When Britain first, at Heaven's command,
  Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of the land,
  And guardian angels sung this strain:
    Rule, Britannia, rule the waves;
    Britons never will be slaves.

The nations, not so blessed as thee,
  Must, in their turns, to tyrants fall,
While thou shalt flourish great and free,
  The dread and envy of them all.
    Rule, etc.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
  More dreadful from each foreign stroke;
As the loud blast that tears the skies
  Serves but to root thy native oak.
    Rule, etc.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame:
  All their attempts to bend thee down

Will but arouse thy generous flame,
But work their woe, and thy renown.
Rule, etc.

To thee belongs the rural reign;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine:
All thine shall be the subject main:
And every shore it circles thine.
Rule, etc.

The Muses, still with freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair:
Blessed isle! with matchless beauty crowned,
And manly hearts to guard the fair:
Rule, Britannia, rule the waves;
Britons never will be slaves.

THEODORE TILTON.

[*From Thou and I.*]

LOVE IN AGE.

For us, the almond-tree
Doth flourish now:
Its whitest bloom is on our brow.
Let others triumph as they may
And wear their garlands gay
Of olive, oak, or bay:
Our crown of glory is, instead,
The hoary head.

Our threescore years and ten,
That measure life to mortal men,
Have lingered to a longer length
By reason of our strength;
Yet, like a tale that hath been told,
They all have passed, and now, behold!
We verily are old;—

Yea, old like Abraham, when he went,
With head down bent,
And mantle rent,
In dole for her who lay in death,
And to the Sons of Heth
The silver shekels gave
For Mamre's gloomy cave,
To be her grave;—

Or, older still, like him
Who, feeble not of limb,
With eyes not dim,
Upclimbed, with staff in hand,
To where Mount Nebo cleft the sky,
And looked and saw the Promised Land
(Forbidden him from on high)
Till, with an unrecorded cry,
He laid him down to die.

So too, for us, the end is nigh.
Our mortal race is nearly run;
Our earthly toil is nearly done!
Ah, thou and I,
Who in the grave so soon shall lie,
Have little time to see the sun—
So little it is nearly none!

What then?
Amen!
All hail, my love, good cheer!
Keep back thy unshed tear!
Not thou nor I
Shall mourn or sigh.
Nay now, we twain—
Old man, old wife.
The few days that remain—
Let us make merry—let us laugh!—
For now at length we quaff
The last, best wine of life,—
The very last—the very best,
The double cup of love and rest.

What though the groaning world declare
That life is but a load of care?—
A burden wearisome to bear?—
That as we journey down the years,
The path is through a vale of tears?—
Yet we who have the burden borne,
And travelled until travel-worn,
Forget the weight upon the back,
Forget the long and weary track,

And sit remembering here to-day
How we were children at our play: —

And half in doze, at idle ease,
Before the hearth-fire's dying brands,
With elbows on our trembling knees,
With chin between our wrinkled hands,
We sail unnavigable seas, —
We roam impenetrable lands, —
We leap from clime to clime, —
We conquer space and time.

. . . . . .

And, howsoever strange it seems,
The dearest of our drowsy dreams
Is of that billow-beaten shore
Where, in our childish days of yore,
We piled the salty sands
Into a palace that still stands! —
Not where it first arose,
Not where the wild wind blows,
Not by the ocean's roar, —
(For, long ago, those turrets fell
Beneath that billowy swell), —
But, down within the heart's deep core,
Our tumbled tower we oft restore
And ever build it o'er and o'er!

We have one palace more, —
Not made with hands, —
Nor have our feet yet entered at its door!
It lieth not behind us, but before!

Dear love, our pilgrimage is thither tending,
And there shall have its ending!

. . . . . .

Ah, though the rapturous vision
Allures us to a Land Elysian,
Yet aged are our feet, and slow,
And not in haste to go.

Life still hath many joys to give,
Whereof the sweetest is — to live.

Then fear we death? Not so!
Or do we tremble? No!
Nor do we even grieve!
And yet a gentle sigh we heave,
And unto Him who fixes fate, —
Without whose sovereign leave,
Down-whispered from on high,
Not even the daisy dares to die, —
We, jointly, thou and I,
Implore a little longer date, —
A little term of kind reprieve, —
A little lease till by and by!

May it be Heaven's decree, —
Here, now, to thee and me, —
That, for a season still,
The eye shall not grow dim;
That, for a few more days,
The ear cease not to hear the hymn
Which the tongue utters to His praise;
That, for a little while,
The heart faint not, nor fail;
For even the wintry sun is bright,
And cheering to our aged sight;
Yea, though the frosts prevail,
Yet even the icy air,
The frozen plain, the leafless wood
Still keep the earth as fresh and fair
As when from Heaven, He called it good!

O final Summoner of the soul!
Grant, of thy pitying grace,
That, for a little longer space,
The pitcher at the fountain's rim
Be shattered not, but still kept whole, —
Still overflowing at the brim!
If but a year, if but a day,
Thy lifted hand, O stay!
Loose Thou not yet, O Lord,
The silver cord!
Break Thou not yet the golden bowl!

[*From Thou and I.*]

UNDER THE SOD.

"Thou and I!"
The voice no longer said;
But two white stones, instead,
Above the twain, long dead,
Still utter, each to each,
The same familiar speech,
"Thou and I!" —

Not spoken to the passer-by,
But just as if, beneath the grass,
Deep under foot of all who pass,
The sleeping dust should wake to say,
Each to its fellow-clay,
Each in the same old way,
"Thou and I!"

And each to either should reply,—
(Tomb murmuring unto tomb,
Stone answering unto stone,
Yet not with sound of human moan,
Nor breath of mortal sigh,
But voiceless as the dead's dumb cry,)—
"Thou and I!"

. . . . .

"The spirit and the body part,
Yet love abideth, heart to heart.

"O silent comrade of my rest,
With hands here crossed upon thy breast,
I know thee who thou art!
O marble brow,
Here pillowed next to mine,
I know the soul divine
That tenanted thy shrine!

"For, though above us, green and high,
The yew-trees grow,
And churchyard ravens fly,
And mourners come and go,
Yet thou and I,
Who dust to dust lie here below,
Still one another know!

"Yea, thee I know—it still is thou;
And me thou know'st—it still is I;
True lovers once, true lovers now!—
The same old vow,
The same old thrill,
The same old love between us still!

"The gloomy grave hath frosts that kill,
But love is chilled not with their chill.

"Love's flame—
Consuming, unconsumed—
In breasts that breathe—in hearts entombed—
Is fed by life and death the same!

"Love's spark
Is brightest when love's house is dark!

"Love's shroud—
That wraps its bosom round—
Must crumble in the charnel ground,
Till all the long white winding-sheet
Shall drop to dust from head to feet:
But love's strong cord,
The eternal tie,
The immortal bond that binds
Love's twain immortal minds;—
This silken knot
Shall never rot—
Nor moulder in the mouldy mound—
Nor mildew—nor decay—
Nor fall apart—nor drop away—
Nor ever be unbound!

"Love's dust,
Whatever grave it fill,
Though buried deep, is deathless still!
Love hath no death, and cannot die!
This love is ours, as here we lie,—
Thou and I!"

THE FOUR SEASONS.

In the balmy April weather,
My love, you know,
When the corn began to grow,
What walks we took together,
What sighs we breathed together,
What vows we pledged together,
In the days of long ago!

In the golden summer weather,
My love, you know,
When the mowers went to mow
What home we built together,
What babes we watched together,
What plans we planned together,
While the skies were all aglow!

In the rainy autumn weather,
My love, you know,
When the winds began to blow,
What tears we shed together,
What mounds we heaped together,
What hopes we lost together,
When we laid our darlings low!

In the wild and wintry weather,
My love, you know,
With our heads as white as snow,
What prayers we pray together,
What fears we share together,
What Heaven we seek together,
For our time has come to go!

SIR MARMADUKE'S MUSINGS.

I WON a noble fame;
But, with a sudden frown,
The people snatched my crown,
And, in the mire, trod down
My lofty name.

I bore a bounteous purse;
And beggars by the way
Then blessed me, day by day;
But I, grown poor as they,
Have now their curse.

I gained what men call friends;
But now their love is hate,
And I have learned, too late,
How mated minds unmate,
And friendship ends.

I clasped a woman's breast,—
As if her heart, I knew,
Or fancied, would be true,—
Who proved, alas! she too!
False like the rest.

I now am all bereft,—
As when some tower doth fall,
With battlement, and wall,
And gate, and bridge, and all,—
And nothing left.

But I account it worth
All pangs of fair hopes crossed —
All loves and honors lost,—
To gain the heavens, at cost
Of losing earth.

So, lest I be inclined
To render ill for ill,—
Henceforth in me instil,
O God, a sweet good will
To all mankind.

RECOMPENSE.

THE Temple of the Lord stood open wide,
And worshippers went up from many lands,
Who, kneeling at the altar, side by side,
Made votive offerings with uplifted hands.
Their gifts were gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.
Then, with a lustrous gleam and rapturous stir,
While all the people trembled and turned pale.
There flew an angel to the altar-rail,
Who, with anointed eyes, keen to discern,
Gazed, noting all the kneelers, who they were,
And what was each one's tribute to the Lord,—
And, gift for gift, with sudden, swift return,
Bestowed on every suppliant his reward.
O mocking recompense! To one, a spear!
To many, each a thorn! To some a nail!
To all, a cross! But unto none a crown!

At last, they saw the angel disappear.
Then, as their timid hearts shook off their fear,
Some rose in anger, flung their treasures down,
And cried, "Such gifts from Heaven as these, we spurn!
They are too cruel, and too keen to bear!
They are too grievous for a human breast!
Heaven sends us heartache, misery, and despair!
We knelt for blessing, but we rise unblest!
If Heaven so mock us, we will cease to pray!"
They left the altar, and they went their way;
But their blaspheming hearts were then self-torn

Far more by pride, and heaven-defying scorn,
Than pierced before by nail, or spear, or thorn!

A few (not many!) with their brows down bent,
Gave thanks for each sharp gift that Heaven had sent,—
And each embraced his separate pain and sting,
As if it were some sweet and pleasant thing,—
And each his cross, with joyful tears, did take,
To bear it for the great Cross-bearer's sake.

Then lo! as from the Temple forth they went,
Their bleeding bosoms, though with anguish rent,
Had, spite of all their pain! — a sweet content;
For on each brow, though not to mortal sight,
The vanished angel left a crown of light!

THE TWO LADDERS.

Benighted in my pilgrimage,— alone,—
And footsore — (for the path to heaven grew steep,)—
I looked for Jacob's pillow of a stone,
In hope of Jacob's vision in my sleep.
Then, in my dream, whereof I quake to tell,—
Not up from earth to heaven, but, oh, sad sight!
The ladder was let down from earth to hell!—
Whereon, ascending from the deep abyss,
Came fiery spirits who, with dismal hiss,
Made woeful clamor of their lost delight,
And stung my eyelids open, till, in fright,
I caught my staff, and at the dead of night,
I, who toward heaven and peace had halted so.
Was fleet of foot to flee from hell and woe!

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH.

THREE SONNETS ON PRAYER.

Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make —
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take,
What parchèd grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,
Stands forth in sunny outline, brave and clear;
We kneel how weak, we rise how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others — that we are not always strong;
That we are ever overborne with care;
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy, and strength, and courage, are with Thee?

A garden so well watered before morn
Is hotly up, that not the swart sun's blaze,
Down beating with unmitigated rays,
Nor arid winds from scorching places borne,

Shall quite prevail to make it bare and shorn
Of its green beauty — shall not quite prevail
That all its morning freshness shall exhale,
Till evening and the evening dews return —
A blessing such as this our hearts might reap,
The freshness of the garden they might share,
Through the long day a heavenly freshness keep,
If, knowing how the day and the day's glare
Must beat upon them, we would largely steep
And water them betimes with dews of prayer.

When hearts are full of yearning tenderness,
For the loved absent, whom we can not reach —
By deed or token, gesture or kind speech,
The spirit's true affection to express;
When hearts are full of innermost distress,
And we are doomed to stand inactive by,
Watching the soul's or body's agony,
Which human effort helps not to make less —
Then like a cup capacious to contain
The overflowings of the heart, is prayer:
The longing of the soul is satisfied,
The keenest darts of anguish blunted are;
And, though we can not cease to yearn or grieve,
Yet we have learned in patience to abide.

LORD, MANY TIMES I AM AWEARY.

Lord, many times I am aweary quite
  Of mine own self, my sin, my vanity —
Yet be not Thou, or I am lost outright, —
  Weary of me.

And hate against myself I often bear,
  And enter with myself in fierce debate:
Take Thou my part against myself, nor share
  In that just hate!

Best friends might loathe us, if what things perverse
  We know of our own selves, they also knew:
Lord, Holy One! if Thou who knowest worse
  Shouldst loathe us too!

[*From Lines to a Friend.*]

WEAK CONSOLATION.

Oh, miserable comfort! Loss is loss,
And death is death; and after all is done —
After the flowers are scattered on the tomb,
After the singing of the sweetest dirge —
The mourner, with his heart uncomforted,
Returning to his solitary home,
Thinks with himself, if any one had aught
Of stronger consolation, he should speak;
If not, 'twere best for ever to hold peace,
And not to mock him with vain words like these.

SADNESS BORN OF BEAUTY.

All beautiful things bring sadness, nor alone
Music, whereof that wisest poet spake;*
Because in us keen longings they awake
After the good for which we pine and groan,
From which exiled we make continual moan,

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* I am never merry when I hear sweet music. — Shakespeare.

Till once again we may our spirits slake
At those clear streams, which man did first forsake,
When he would dig for fountains of his own.
All beauty makes us sad, yet not in vain —
For who would be ungracious to refuse,
Or not to use, this sadness without pain,
Whether it flows upon us from the hues
Of sunset, from the time of stars and dews,
From the clear sky, or waters pure of stain?

THE LENT JEWELS.

In schools of wisdom all the day was spent:
His steps at eve the Rabbi homeward bent,
With homeward thoughts, which dwelt upon the wife
And two fair children who consoled his life,
She, meeting at the threshold, led him in,
And with these words preventing, did begin: —
"Ever rejoicing at your wished return,
Yet am I most so now: for since this morn
I have been much perplexed and sorely tried
Upon one point which you shall now decide.
Some years ago, a friend into my care
Some jewels gave — rich, precious gems they were;
But having given them in my charge, this friend
Did afterward nor come for them, nor send,
But left them in my keeping for so long,
That now it almost seems to me a wrong
That he should suddenly arrive to-day,
To take those jewels, which he left, away.
What think you? Shall I freely yield them back,
And with no murmuring? — so henceforth to lack
Those gems myself, which I had learned to see
Almost as mine for ever, mine in fee."

"What question can be here? Your own true heart
Must needs advise you of the only part:
That may be claimed again which was but lent,
And should be yielded with no discontent.
Nor surely can we find herein a wrong,
That it was left us to enjoy it long."

"Good is the word," she answered, "may we now
And evermore that it is good allow!"
And, rising, to an inner chamber led,
And there she showed him, stretched upon one bed,
Two children pale: and he the jewels knew,
Which God had lent him, and resumed anew.

PATIENCE.

Be patient! oh, be patient! Put your ear against the earth;
Listen there how noiselessly the germ o' the seed has birth —
How noiselessly and gently it upheaves its little way,
Till it parts the scarcely broken ground, and the blade stands up in the day.

Be patient! oh, be patient! The germs of mighty thought
Must have their silent undergrowth, must underground be wrought:

But as sure as there's a power that makes the grass appear,
Our land shall be green with liberty, the blade-time shall be here.

Be patient! oh, be patient — go and watch the wheat ears grow —
So imperceptibly that ye can mark nor change nor throe —
Day after day, day after day, till the ear is fully grown,
And then again day after day, till the ripened field is brown.

Be patient! oh, be patient! — though yet our hopes are green,
The harvest-fields of freedom shall be crowned with sunny sheen.
Be ripening! be ripening! — mature your silent way,
Till the whole broad land is tongued with fire on freedom's harvest day!

HAPPINESS IN LITTLE THINGS OF THE PRESENT.

We live not in our moments or our years:
The present we fling from us like the rind
Of some sweet future, which we after find
Bitter to taste, or bind *that* in with fears,
And water it beforehand with our tears —
Vain tears for that which never may arrive;
Meanwhile the joy whereby we ought to live,
Neglected, or unheeded, disappears.
Wiser it were to welcome and make ours
Whate'er of good, though small, the present brings —
Kind greetings, sunshine, song of birds, and flowers,
With a child's pure delight in little things;
And of the griefs unborn to rest secure,
Knowing that mercy ever will endure.

THE ERMINE.

To miry places me the hunters drive,
Where I my robes of purest white must stain;
Then yield I, nor for life will longer strive,
For spotless death, ere spotted life, is gain.

THE BEES.

We light on fruits and flowers, and purest things;
For if on carcases or aught unclean,
When homeward we returned, with mortal stings
Would slay us the keen watchers round our queen.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

Leaning my bosom on a pointed thorn,
I bleed, and bleeding sing my sweetest strain:
For sweetest songs of saddest hearts are born,
And who may here dissever love and pain?

THE SNAKE.

Myself I force some narrowest passage through,
Leaving my old and wrinkled skin behind,
And issuing forth in splendor of my new:
Hard entrance into life all creatures find.

THE TIGER.

Hearing sweet music, as in fell despite,
Himself the tiger doth in pieces tear:
The melody of other men's delight
There are, alas! who can as little bear.

THE DIAMOND.

I ONLY polished am in mine own dust —
Naught else against my hardness will prevail:
And thou, O man, in thine own sufferings must
Be polished: every meaner art will fail.

FALLING STARS.

ANGELS are we, that, once from heaven exiled,
Would climb its crystal battlements again;
But have their keen-eyed watchers not beguiled,
Hurled by their glittering lances back amain.

HARMOSAN.

Now the third and fatal conflict for the Persian throne was done,
And the Moslem's fiery valor had the crowning victory won.

Harmosan, the last and boldest the invader to defy,
Captive overborne by numbers, they were bringing forth to die.

Then exclaimed that noble captive: "Lo! I perish in my thirst;
Give me but one drink of water, and let then arrive the worst!"

In his hand he took the goblet, but awhile the draught forbore,
Seeming doubtfully the purpose of the foemen to explore.

Well might then have paused the bravest — for around him angry foes
With a hedge of naked weapons did that lonely man enclose.

"But what fear'st thou?" cried the caliph; — "is it, friend, a secret blow?
Fear it not! — our gallant Moslem no such treacherous dealing know.

"Thou mayst quench thy thirst securely, for thou shalt not die before
Thou hast drunk that cup of water — this reprieve is thine — no more!"

Quick the satrap dashed the goblet down to earth with ready hand,
And the liquid sank for ever, lost amid the burning sand.

"Thou hast said that mine my life is, till the water of that cup
I have drained; then bid thy servants that spilled water gather up!"

For a moment stood the caliph as by doubtful passions stirred —
Then exclaimed: "For ever sacred must remain a monarch's word.

"Bring another cup, and straightway to the noble Persian give:
Drink, I said before, and perish — now I bid thee drink and live!"

JOHN TOWNSEND TROWBRIDGE.

THE NAME IN THE BARK.

The self of so long ago,
And the self I struggle to know, —
I sometimes think we are two,—or are we shadows of one?
To-day the shadow I am
Returns in the sweet summer calm
To trace where the earlier shadow flitted awhile in the sun.

Once more in the dewy morn
I came through the whispering corn;
Cool to my fevered cheek soft breezy kisses were blown;
The ribboned and tasselled grass
Leaned over the flattering glass,
And the sunny waters trilled the same low musical tone.

To the gray old birch I came,
Where I whittled my school-boy name:
The nimble squirrel once more ran skippingly over the rail,
The blackbirds down among
The alders noisily sung,
And under the blackberry-brier whistled the serious quail.

I came, remembering well
How my little shadow fell,
As I painfully reached and wrote to leave to the future a sign:
There, stooping a little, I found
A half-healed, curious wound,
An ancient scar in the bark, but no initial of mine!

Then the wise old boughs overhead
Took counsel together, and said,—
And the buzz of their leafy lips like a murmur of prophecy passed,—
"He is busily carving a name
In the tough old wrinkles of fame;
But, cut he as deep as he may, the lines will close over at last!"

Sadly I pondered awhile,
Then I lifted my soul with a smile,
And I said "Not cheerful men, but anxious children are we,
Still hurting ourselves with the knife,
As we toil at the letters of life,
Just marring a little the rind, never piercing the heart of the tree."

And now by the rivulet's brink
I leisurely saunter, and think
How idle this strife will appear when circling ages have run,
If then the real I am
Descend from the heavenly calm,
To trace where the shadow I seem once flitted awhile in the sun.

THE RESTORED PICTURE.

In later years, veiling its unblest face
In a most loathsome place,
The cheap adornment of a house of shame,
It hung, till, gnawed away
By tooth of slow decay,
It fell, and parted from its mouldering frame.

The rotting canvas, faintly smiling still,
From worldly puff and frill,
Its ghastly smile of coquetry and pride,
Crumpling its faded charms
And yellow jewelled arms,
Mere rubbish now, was rudely cast aside.

The shadow of a Genius crossed the gate:
He, skilled to re-create
In old and ruined paintings their lost soul
And beauty,— one who knew
The Master's touch by true,
Swift instinct, as the needle knows the pole,—

Looked on it, and straightway his searching eyes
Saw through its coarse disguise
Of vulgar paint and grime and varnish stain
The Art that slept beneath.—
A chrysalis in its sheath,
That waited to be waked to life again.

Upon enduring canvas to renew
Each wondrous trait and hue,—
This is the miracle, his chosen task!
He bears it to his house,
And there from lips and brows
With loving touch removes their alien mask.

For so on its perfection time had laid
An early mellowing shade;
Then hands unskilled, each seeking to impart
Fresh tints to form and face.
With some more modern grace,
Had buried quite the mighty Master's Art.

First, razed from the divine original,
Brow, cheek, and lid, went all
That outer shape of worldliness; when, lo!
Beneath the varnished crust
Of long-embedded dust
A fairer face appears, emerging slow,—

The features of a simple shepherdess!
Pure eyes, and golden tress,
And, lastly, crook in hand. But deeper still
The Master's work lies hid;
And still through lip and lid
Works the Restorer with unsparing skill.

Behold, at length, in tender light revealed,
The soul so long concealed!
All heavenly faint at first, then softly bright,
As smiles the young-eyed Dawn
When darkness is withdrawn,
A shining angel breaks upon the sight!

Restored, perfected, after the divine
Imperishable design,
Lo, now! that once despised and outcast thing
Holds its true place among
The fairest pictures hung
In the high palace of our Lord the King!

MIDWINTER.

The speckled sky is dim with snow,
The light flakes falter and fall slow;
Athwart the hill-top, rapt and pale,
Silently drops a silvery veil;
And all the valley is shut in
By flickering curtains gray and thin.

. . . . . .

I watch the slow flakes as they fall
On bank and brier and broken wall;
Over the orchard, waste and brown,
All noiselessly they settle down,

Tipping the apple-boughs, and each
Light quivering twig of plum and peach.

On turf and curb and bower-roof
The snow storm spreads its ivory woof;
It paves with pearl the garden walk;
And lovingly round tattered stalk
And shivering stem its magic weaves
A mantle fair as lily-leaves.

The hooded beehive, small and low,
Stands like a maiden in the snow;
And the old door-slab is half hid
Under an alabaster lid.

All day it snows: the sheeted post
Gleams in the dimness like a ghost;
All day the blasted oak has stood
A muffled wizard of the wood;
Garland and airy cap adorn
The sumach and the wayside thorn.
And clustering spangles lodge and shine
In the dark tresses of the pine.

The ragged bramble, dwarfed and old,
Shrinks like a beggar in the cold;
In surplice white the cedar stands,
And blesses him with priestly hands.

Still cheerily the chickadee
Singeth to me on fence and tree:
But in my inmost ear is heard
The music of a holier bird;
And heavenly thoughts, as soft and white
As snow-flakes, on my soul alight,
Clothing with love my lonely heart,
Healing with peace each bruisèd part,
Till all my being seems to be
Transfigured by their purity.

MIDSUMMER.

. . . . . .

Becalmed along the azure sky,
The argosies of cloudland lie,
Whose shores, with many a shining rift,
Far off their pearl-white peaks uplift.
Through all the long midsummer-day
The meadow-sides are sweet with hay.
I seek the coolest sheltered seat,
Just where the field and forest meet,—
Where grow the pine-trees tall and bland,
The ancient oaks austere and grand,
And fringy roots and pebbles fret
The ripples of the rivulet.

I watch the mowers, as they go
Through the tall grass, a white-sleeved row.
With even stroke their scythes they swing,
In tune their merry whetstones ring.
Behind the nimble youngsters run,
And toss the thick swaths in the sun.
The cattle graze, while, warm and still,
Slopes the broad pasture, basks the hill,
And bright, where summer breezes break,
The green wheat crinkles like a lake.

The butterfly and bumble-bee
Come to the pleasant woods with me;
Quickly before me runs the quail,
Her chickens skulk behind the rail;
High up the lone wood-pigeon sits,
And the woodpecker pecks and flits.
Sweet woodland music sinks and swells,
The brooklet rings its tinkling bells,
The swarming insects drone and hum,
The partridge beats his throbbing drum,
The squirrel leaps among the boughs,
And chatters in his leafy house.
The oriole flashes by; and look!
Into the mirror of the brook,
Where the vain bluebird trims his coat,
Two tiny feathers fall and float.

As silently, as tenderly,
The down of peace descends on me.
O, this is peace! I have no need
Of friend to talk, of book to read:

A dear Companion here abides;
Close to my thrilling heart He hides;
The holy silence is His Voice:
I lie and listen, and rejoice.

REAL ESTATE.

The pleasant grounds are greenly turfed and graded;
A sturdy porter waiteth at the gate;
The graceful avenues, serenely shaded,
And curving paths, are interlaced and braided
In many a maze around my fair estate.

Here bloom the early hyacinth, and clover
And amaranth and myrtle wreathe the ground;
The pensive lily leans her pale cheek over;
And hither comes the bee, light-hearted rover,
Wooing the sweet-breathed flowers with soothing sound.

Entwining, in their manifold digressions,
Lands of my neighbors, wind these peaceful ways.
The masters, coming to their calm possessions,
Followed in solemn state by long processions,
Make quiet journeys these still summer days.

This is my freehold! Elms and fringy larches,
Maples and pines, and stately firs of Norway,
Build round me their green pyramids and arches;
Sweetly the robin sings, while slowly marches
The stately pageant past my verdant doorway.

Oh, sweetly sing the robin and the sparrow!
But the pale tenant very silent rides.
A low green roof receiveth him; — so narrow
His hollow tenement, a schoolboy's arrow
Might span the space betwixt its grassy sides.

The flowers around him ring their wind-swung chalices,
A great bell tolls the pageant's slow advance.
The poor alike, and lords of parks and palaces,
From all their busy schemes, their fears and fallacies,
Find here their rest and sure inheritance.

No more hath Cæsar or Sardanapalus!
Of all our wide dominions, soon or late,
Only a fathom's space can aught avail us;
This is the heritage that shall not fail us:
Here man at last comes to his Real Estate.

"Secure to him and to his heirs forever"!
Nor wealth nor want shall vex his spirit more.
Treasures of hope and love and high endeavor
Follow their blest proprietor; but never
Could pomp or riches pass this little door.

Flatterers attend him, but alone he enters, —
Shakes off the dust of earth, no more to roam.
His trial ended, sealed his soul's indentures,
The wanderer, weary from his long adventures,
Beholds the peace of his eternal home.

Lo, more than life, Man's great Estate comprises!
While for the earthly corner of his mansion
A little nook in shady Time suffices,
The rainbow-pillared heavenly roof arises
Ethereal in limitless expansion!

THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN.

ALL round the lake the wet woods shake
From drooping boughs their showers of pearl;
From floating skiff to towering cliff
The rising vapors part and curl.
The west-wind stirs among the firs
High up the mountain side emerging;
The light illumes a thousand plumes
Through billowy banners round them surging.

A glory smites the craggy heights:
And in a halo of the haze.
Flushed with faint gold, far up, behold
That mighty face, that stony gaze!
In the wild sky upborne so high
Above us perishable creatures,
Confronting Time with those sublime,
Impassive, adamantine, features.

Thou beaked and bald high front, miscalled
The profile of a human face!
No kin art thou, O Titan brow,
To puny man's ephemeral race.
The groaning earth to thee gave birth,—
Throes and convulsions of the planet;
Lonely uprose, in grand repose,
Those eighty feet of facial granite.

Here long, while vast, slow ages passed,
Thine eyes (if eyes be thine) beheld
But solitudes of crags and woods.
Where eagles screamed and panthers yelled.
Before the fires of our pale sires
In the first log-built cabin twinkled,
Or red men came for fish and game,
That scalp was scarred, that face was wrinkled.

We may not know how long ago
That ancient countenance was young;
Thy sovereign brow was seamed as now
When Moses wrote and Homer sung.
Empires and states it antedates,
And wars, and arts, and crime, and glory;
In that dim morn when man was born
Thy head with centuries was hoary.

Thou lonely one! nor frost, nor sun,
Nor tempest leaves on thee its trace;
The stormy years are but as tears
That pass from thy unchanging face.
With unconcern as grand and stern,
Those features viewed, which now survey us,
A green world rise from seas of ice,
And order come from mud and chaos.

Canst thou not tell what then befell?
What forces moved, or fast or slow;
How grew the hills; what heats, what chills,
What strange, dim life, so long ago?
High-visaged peak, wilt thou not speak?
One word for all our learnèd wrangle!
What earthquakes shaped, what glaciers scraped,
That nose, and gave the chin its angle?

Our pygmy thought to thee is naught,
Our petty questionings are vain;
In its great trance thy countenance
Knows not compassion nor disdain.

With far-off hum we go and come,
The gay, the grave, the busy-idle;
And all things done, to thee are one,
Alike the burial and the bridal.

Thy permanence, long ages hence,
Will mock the pride of mortals still.
Returning springs, with songs and wings
And fragrance, shall these valleys fill;
The free winds blow, fall rain or snow,
The mountains brim their crystal breakers;
Still come and go, still ebb and flow,
The summer tides of pleasure-seekers.

The dawns shall gild the peaks where build
The eagles, many a future pair;
The gray scud lag on wood and crag,
Dissolving in the purple air;
The sunlight gleam on lake and stream,
Boughs wave, storms break, and still at even
All glorious hues the world suffuse,
Heaven mantle earth, earth melt in heaven!

Nations shall pass like summer's grass,
And times unborn grow old and change;
New governments and great events
Shall rise, and science new and strange;
Yet will thy gaze confront the days
With its eternal calm and patience,
The evening red still light thy head,
Above thee burn the constellations.

O silent speech, that well can teach
The little worth of words or fame!
I go my way, but thou wilt stay
While future millions pass the same:
But what is this I seem to miss?
Those features fall into confusion!
A further pace — where was that face?
The veriest fugitive illusion!

Gray eidolon! so quickly gone,
When eyes that make thee onward move;
Whose vast pretence of permanence
A little progress can disprove!
Like some huge wraith of human faith
That to the mind takes form and measure;
Grim monolith of creed or myth,
Outlined against the eternal azure!

O Titan, how dislimned art thou!
A withered cliff is all we see;
That giant nose, that grand repose,
Have in a moment ceased to be;
Or still depend on lines that blend,
On merging shapes, and sight, and distance,
And in the mind alone can find
Imaginary brief existence!

STANZAS FROM "SERVICE."

Well might red shame my cheek consume!
O service slighted!
O Bride of Paradise, to whom
I long was plighted!
Do I with burning lips profess
To serve thee wholly,
Yet labor less for blessedness
Than fools for folly?

The wary worldling spread his toils
Whilst I was sleeping;
The wakeful miser locked his spoils,
Keen vigils keeping:
I loosed the latches of my soul
To pleading Pleasure,
Who stayed one little hour, and stole
My heavenly treasure.

A friend for friend's sake will endure
Sharp provocations;
And knaves are cunning to secure,
By cringing patience,
And smiles upon a smarting cheek,
Some dear advantage,—
Swathing their grievances in meek
Submission's bandage.

Yet for thy sake I will not take
One drop of trial,
But raise rebellious hands to break
The bitter vial.
At hardship's surly-visaged churl
My spirit sallies;
And melts, O Peace! thy priceless pearl
In passion's chalice.

Yet never quite, in darkest night,
Was I forsaken:
Down trickles still some starry rill
My heart to waken.

O Love Divine! could I resign
This changeful spirit
To walk thy ways, what wealth of grace
Might I inherit!

If one poor flower of thanks to thee
Be truly given,
All night thou snowest down to me
Lilies of heaven!
One task of human love fulfilled
Thy glimpses tender,
My days of lonely labor gild,
With gleams of splendor!

MY COMRADE AND I.

We two have grown up so divinely together,
Flower within flower from seed within seed,
The sagest philosopher cannot say whether
His being or mine was first called and decreed.
In the life before birth, by inscrutable ties,
We were linked each to each; I am bound up in him;
He sickens, I languish; without me, he dies;
I am life of his life, he is limb of my limb.

Twin babes from one cradle, I tottered about with him,
Chased the bright butterflies, singing, a boy with him;
Still as a man I am borne in and out with him,
Sup with him, sleep with him, suffer, enjoy with him.
Faithful companion, me long he has carried
Unseen in his bosom, a lamp to his feet;
More near than a bridegroom, to him I am married,
As light in the sunbeam is wedded to heat.

If my beam be withdrawn he is senseless and blind;
I am sight to his vision, I hear with his ears;
His the marvellous brain, I the masterful mind;
I laugh with his laughter, and weep with his tears
So well that the ignorant deem us but one:
They see but one shape and they name us one name.
O pliant accomplice! what deeds we have done,
Thus banded together for glory or shame.

When evil waylays us, and passion surprises,
And we are too feeble to strive or to fly,
When hunger compels or when pleasure entices,
Which most is the sinner, my comrade or I?
And when over perils and pains and temptations
I triumph, where still I should falter and faint,
But for him, iron-nerved for heroical patience,
Whose then is the virtue, and which is the saint?

Am I the one sinner? of honors sole claimant
  For actions which only we two can perform?
Am I the true creature, and thou but the raiment?
  Thou magical mantle, all vital and warm,
Wrapped about me, a screen from the rough winds of Time,
  Of texture so flexile to feature and gesture!
Can ever I part from thee? Is there a clime
  Where Life needeth not this terrestrial vesture?

When comes the sad summons to sever the sweet
  Subtle tie that unites us, and tremulous, fearful.
I feel thy loosed fetters depart from my feet;
  When friends gather round us, pale-visaged and tearful,
Beweep and bewail thee, thou fair earthly prison!
  And kiss thy cold doors, for thy inmate mistaken;
Their eyes seeing not the freed captive, arisen
  From thy trammels unclasped and thy shackles downshaken;

Oh, then shall I linger, reluctant to break
  The dear sensitive chains that about me have grown?
And all this bright world, can I bear to forsake
  Its embosoming beauty and love, and alone
Journey on to I know not what regions untried?
  Exists there, beyond the dim cloud-rack of death,
Such life as enchants us? O skies arched and wide!
  O delicate senses! O exquisite breath!

Ah, tenderly, tenderly over thee hovering,
  I shall look down on thee, empty and cloven,
Pale mould of my being!—thou visible covering
  Wherefrom my invisible raiment is woven.
Though sad be the passage, nor pain shall appall me,
  Nor parting, assured, wheresoever I range
The glad fields of existence that naught can befall me
  That is not still beautiful, blessed and strange.

MARTIN FARQUHAR TUPPER.*

[*From Self-Acquaintance.*]

ILL-CHOSEN PURSUITS.

THE blind at an easel, the palsied with a graver, the halt making for the goal,
The deaf ear tuning psaltery, the stammerer discoursing eloquence,—
What wonder if all fail? the shaft flieth wide of the mark,
Alike if itself be crooked, or the bow be strung awry;
And the mind which were excellent in one way, but foolishly toileth in another,
What is it but an ill-strung bow, and its aim a crooked arrow?
By knowledge of self, thou provest thy powers; put not the racer to the plough,
Nor goad the toilsome ox to wager his slowness with the fleet.

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* The extracts from this author are from Proverbial Philosophy.

[*From Fame.*]

THE DIGNITY AND PATIENCE OF GENIUS.

A GREAT mind is an altar on a hill; should the priest descend from his altitude
To canvass offerings and worship from dwellers on the plain?
Rather with majestic perseverance, will he minister in solitary grandeur,
Confident the time will come when pilgrims shall be flocking to the shrine.
For fame is the birthright of genius; and he recketh not how long it be delayed:
The heir need not hasten to his heritage, when he knoweth that his tenure is eternal.
The careless poet of Avon, was he troubled for his fame?
Or the deep-mouthed chronicler of Paradise, heeded he the suffrage of his equals?
Mæonides took no thought, committing all his honors to the future,
And Flaccus, standing on his watch-tower, spied the praise of ages.

[*From Truth in Things False.*]

SPIRITUAL FEELERS.

THE soul hath its feelers, cobwebs floating on the wind,
That catch events in their approach with sure and apt presentiment,
So that some halo of attraction heraldeth a coming friend,
Investing, in his likeness, the stranger that passed on before,
And while the word is in thy mouth, behold thy word fulfilled,
And he of whom we spake can answer for himself.

[*From Writing.*]

LETTERS.

THEIR preciousness in absence is proved by the desire of their presence:
When the despairing lover waiteth day after day,
Looking for a word in reply, one word writ by that hand,
And cursing bitterly the morn ushered in by blank disappointment:
Or when the long-looked-for answer argueth a cooling friend,
And the mind is plied suspiciously with dark inexplicable doubts,
While thy wounded heart counteth its imaginary scars,
And thou art the innocent and injured, that friend the capricious and in fault:
Or when the earnest petition, that craveth for thy needs
Unheeded, yea, unopened, tortureth with starving delay:
Or when the silence of a son, who would have written of his welfare,
Racketh a father's bosom with sharp-cutting fears:
For a letter, timely writ, is a rivet to the chain of affection;
And a letter, untimely delayed, is as rust to the solder.
The pen, flowing in love, or dipped black in hate,
Or tipped with delicate courtesies, or harshly edged with censure,
Hath quickened more good than the sun, more evil than the sword,
More joy than woman's smile, more woe than frowning fortune:
And shouldst thou ask my judgment of that which hath most profit in the world,
For answer take thou this, The prudent penning of a letter.

[*From Beauty.*]

THE CONQUEROR.

Thou mightier than Manoah's son, whence is thy great strength,
And wherein the secret of thy craft, O charmer charming wisely?—

. . . . . .

Ajax may rout a phalanx, but beauty shall enslave him single-handed:
Pericles ruled Athens, yet is he the servant of Aspasia:
Light were the labor, and often-told the tale, to count the victories of beauty,—

. . . . . .

Learning sitteth at her feet, and Idleness laboreth to please her;
Folly hath flung aside his bells, and leaden Dulness gloweth;
Prudence is rash in her defence; Frugality filleth her with riches;
Despair came to her for counsel; and Bereavement was glad when she consoled;
Justice putteth up his sword at the tear of supplicating beauty
And Mercy, with indulgent haste, hath pardoned beauty's sin.
For beauty is the substitute for all things, satisfying every absence,
The rich delirious cup, to make all else forgotten.

[*From Beauty.*]

MENTAL SUPREMACY.

There is a beauty of the reason: grandly independent of externals,
It looketh from the windows of the house, shining in the man triumphant.
I have seen the broad blank face of some misshapen dwarf
Lit on a sudden as with glory, the brilliant light of mind:
Who then imagined him deformed? intelligence is blazing on his forehead,
There is empire in his eye, and sweetness on his lip, and his brown cheek glittereth with beauty:
And I have known some Nireus of the camp, a varnished paragon of chamberers,
Fine, elegant, and shapely, moulded as the masterpiece of Phidias,—
Such an one, with intellects abased, have I noted crouching to the dwarf,
Whilst his lovers scorn the fool whose beauty hath departed!

[*From Beauty.*]

THE SOURCE OF MAN'S RULING PASSION.

Verily the fancy may be false, yet hath it met me in my musings,
(As expounding the pleasantness of pleasure, but no ways extenuating license,)
That even those yearnings after beauty, in wayward wanton youth,
When guileless of ulterior end, it craveth but to look upon the lovely,
Seem like struggles of the soul, dimly remembering pre-existence,
And feeling in its blindness for a long-lost god to satisfy its longing;

. . . . . .

God, the undiluted good, is root and stock of beauty,
And every child of reason drew his essence from that stem.
Therefore, it is of intuition, an innate hankering for home,

A sweet returning to the well, from which our spirit flowed,
That we, unconscious of a cause, should bask these darkened souls
In some poor relics of the light that blazed in primal beauty.

. . . . . .

Only, being burdened with the body, spiritual appetite is warped,
And sensual man, with taste corrupted, drinketh of pollutions:
Impulse is left, but indiscriminate; his hunger feasteth upon carrion;
His natural love of beauty doteth over beauty in decay.
He still thirsteth for the beautiful; but his delicate ideal hath grown gross,
And the very sense of thirst hath been fevered from affection into passion.

[*From Indirect Influences.*]

ARGUMENT.

The weakness of accident is strong, where the strength of design is weak
And a casual analogy convinceth, when a mind beareth not argument.
Will not a man listen? be silent; and prove thy maxim by example:
Never fear, thou losest not thy hold, though thy mouth doth not render a reason.
Contend not in wisdom with a fool, for thy sense maketh much of his conceit,
And some errors never would have thriven, had it not been for learnèd refutation;
Yea, much evil hath been caused by an honest wrestler for truth.
And much of unconscious good, by the man that hated wisdom:
For the intellect judgeth closely, and if thou overstep thy argument,
Or seem not consistent with thyself, or fail in thy direct purpose,
The mind that went along with thee, shall stop and return without thee,
And thou shalt have raised a foe, where thou mightest have won a friend.

[*From Indirect Influences.*]

THE POWER OF SUGGESTION.

Hints, shrewdly strown, mightily disturb the spirit,
Where a barefaced accusation would be too ridiculous for calumny:
The sly suggestion touches nerves, and nerves contract the fronds,
And the sensitive mimosa of affection trembleth to its root;
And friendships, the growth of half a century, those oaks that laugh at storms,
Have been cankered in a night by a worm, even as the prophet's gourd.
Hast thou loved, and not known jealousy? for a sidelong look
Can please or pain thy heart more than the multitude of proofs:
Hast thou hated, and not learned that thy silent scorn
Doth deeper aggravate thy foe than loud-cursing malice? —

. . . . . .

Thinkest thou the thousand eyes that shine with rapture on a ruin,
Would have looked with half their wonder on the perfect pile?
And wherefore not — but that light hints, suggesting unseen beauties
Fill the complacent gazer with self-grown conceits?

And so, the rapid sketch winneth more praise to the painter,
Than the consummate work elaborated on his easel:
And so, the Helvetic lion caverned in the living rock
Hath more of majesty and force, than if upon a marble pedestal.

. . . . What hath charmed thine ear in music?
Is it the labored theme, the curious fugue or cento,—
Nor rather the sparkles of intelligence flashing from some strange note
Or the soft melody of sounds far sweeter for simplicity?
. . . . What hath filled thy mind in reading?
Is it the volume of detail, where all is orderly set down,
And they that read may run, nor need to stop and think;
The book carefully accurate, that counteth thee no better than a fool,
Gorging the passive mind with annotated notes;—
Nor rather the half-suggested thoughts, the riddles thou mayest solve;

. . . . . .

The light analogy, or deep allusion, trusted to thy learning,
The confidence implied in thy skill to unravel meaning mysteries?
For ideas are ofttimes shy of the close furniture of words,
And thought, wherein only is power, may be best conveyed by a suggestion.
The flash that lighteth up a valley, amid the dark midnight of a storm,
Coineth the mind with that scene sharper than fifty summers.

[*From Names.*]

ILL-CHRISTENED.

Who would call the tench a whale, or style a torch, Orion?
Yet many a silly parent hath dealt likewise with his nursling.
Give thy child a fit distinguishment, making him sole tenant of a name,
For it were sore hindrance to hold it in common with a hundred;
In the Babel of confused identities fame is little feasible,
The felon shall detract from the philanthropist, and the sage share honors with the simple:
Still, in thy title of distinguishment, fall not into arrogant assumption.
Steering from caprice and affectations; and for all thou doest have a reason.
He that is ambitious for his son, should give him untried names,
For those that have served other men, haply may injure by their evils;
Or otherwise may hinder by their glories; therefore set him by himself,
To win for his individual name some clear specific praise.
There were nine Homers, all goodly sons of song; but where is any record of the eight?
One grew to fame, an Aaron's rod, and swallowed up his brethren.
Who knoweth? more distinctly titled, those dead eight had lived;

. . . . . .

Art thou named of a family, the same in successive generations?
It is open to thee still to earn for epithets, such an one, the good or great.
Art thou named foolishly? show that thou art wiser than thy fathers,
Live to shame their vanity or sin by dutiful devotion to thy sphere.
Art thou named discreetly? it is well, the course is free;
No competitor shall claim thy colors, neither fix his faults upon thee:
Hasten to the goal of fame between the posts of duty,
And win a blessing from the world, that men may love thy name;

[*From Indirect Influences.*]

THE FORCE OF TRIFLES.

A SENTENCE hath formed a character, and a character subdued a kingdom;
A picture hath ruined souls, or raised them to commerce with the skies.

. . . . . .

Planets govern not the soul, nor guide the destinies of man,
But trifles, lighter than straws, are levers in the building up of character.

[*From Neglect.*]

TO MURMURERS.

YET once more, griever at Neglect, hear me to thy comfort, or rebuke;
For, after all thy just complaint, the world is full of love.

. . . . . .

For human benevolence is large, though many matters dwarf it,
Prudence, ignorance, imposture, and the straitenings of circumstance and time.
And if to the body, so to the mind, the mass of men are generous:
Their estimate who know us best, is seldom seen to err:
Be sure the fault is thine, as pride, or shallowness, or vanity,
If all around thee, good and bad, neglect thy seeming merit.

. . . . . .

Therefore examine thy state, O self-accounted martyr of Neglect,
It may be, thy merit is a cubit, and thy measure thereof a furlong:
But grant it greater than thy thoughts, and grant that men thy fellows
For pleasure, business, or interest, misuse, forget, neglect thee, —
Still be thou conqueror in this, the consciousness of high deservings;
Let it suffice thee to be worthy; faint not thou for praise;
For that thou art, be grateful; go humbly even in thy confidence;
And set thy foot on the neck of an enemy so harmless as Neglect.

[*From Memory.*]

HINTS OF PRE-EXISTENCE.

WERE I at Petra, could I not declare, My soul hath been here before me?
Am I strange to the columned halls, the calm dead grandeur of Palmyra?
Know I not thy mount, O Carmel! Have I not voyaged on the Danube
Nor seen the glare of Arctic snows, — nor the black tents of the Tartar?
Is it then a dream, that I remember the faces of them of old?

. . . . . .

Be ye my judges, imaginative minds, full-fledged to soar into the sun,
Whose grosser natural thoughts the chemistry of wisdom hath sublimed,
Have ye not confessed to a feeling, a consciousness, strange and vague,
That ye have gone this way before, and walk again your daily life,
Tracking an old routine, and on some foreign strand,
Where bodily ye have never stood, finding your own footsteps?
Hath not at times some recent friend looked out an old familiar,
Some newest circumstance or place teemed as with ancient memories?
A startling sudden flash lighteth up all for an instant,
And then it is quenched, as in darkness, and leaveth the cold spirit trembling.

[*From Neglect.*]

LATE VALUATION.

Good men are the health of the world, valued only when it perisheth;
Like water, light, and air, all precious in their absence.
Who hath considered the blessing of his breath, till the poison of an asthma struck him?
Who hath regarded the just pulses of his heart, till spasm or paralysis have stopped them?
Even thus, an unobserved routine of daily grace and wisdom,
When no more here, had worship of a world, whose penitence atoned for its neglect.

[*From Mystery.*]

FOREKNOWLEDGE UNDESIRABLE.

For mystery is man's life; we wake to the whisperings of novelty:
And what though we lie down disappointed? we sleep, to wake in hope.
The letter, or the news, the chances and the changes, matters that may happen,
Sweeten or embitter daily life with the honey-gall of mystery.
For we walk blindfold, — and a minute may be much, — a step may reach the precipice;
What earthly loss, what heavenly gain, may not this day produce?
Levelled of Alps and Andes, without its valleys and ravines,
How dull the face of earth, unfeatured of both beauty and sublimity:
And so, shorn of mystery, beggared in its hopes and fears,
How flat the prospect of existence, mapped by intuitive foreknowledge?

[*From To-Day.*]

LIFE.

A man's life is a tower, with a staircase of many steps,
That, as he toileth upward, crumble successively behind him:
No going back, the past is an abyss; no stopping, for the present perisheth;
But ever hasting on, precarious on the foothold of To-day.

[*From To-Morrow.*]

THE WORD OF BANE AND BLESSING.

Often, the painful present is comforted by flattering the future.
And kind To-morrow beareth half the burdens of To-day.
To-morrow, whispereth weakness; and To-morrow findeth him the weaker.
To-morrow, promiseth conscience; and behold, no to-day for a fulfilment.
O name of happy omen unto youth, O bitter word of terror to the dotard,
Goal of folly's lazy wish, and sorrow's ever-coming friend,
Fraud's loophole, — caution's hint, — and trap to catch the honest, —
Thou wealth to many poor, disgrace to many noble,
Thou hope and fear, thou weal and woe, thou remedy, thou ruin,
How thickly swarms of thought are clustering round To-morrow.

[*From To-Morrow.*]

PROCRASTINATION.

Lo, it is the even of To-day, — a day so lately a To-morrow;
Where are those high resolves, those hopes of yesternight?
O faint heart, still shall thy whisper be, To-morrow,
And must the growing avalanche of sin roll down that easy slope?
Alas, it is ponderous, and moving on in might, that a Sisyphus may not stop it;
But haste thee with the lever of a prayer, and stem its strength To-day.

HENRY VAUGHAN.

THE SEED GROWING SECRETLY.

. . . . .

Dear, secret greenness! nurst below!
Tempests and winds and winter-nights
Vex not, that but One sees thee grow,
That One made all these lesser lights.

If those bright joys He singly sheds
On thee, were all met in one crown,
Both sun and stars would hide their heads;
And moons, though full, would get them down.

Let glory be their bait whose minds
Are all too high for a low cell:
Though hawks can prey through storms and winds,
The poor bee in her hive must dwell.

Glory, the crowd's cheap tinsel, still
To what most takes them is a drudge;
And they too oft take good for ill,
And thriving vice for virtue judge.

What needs a conscience calm and bright
Within itself an outward test?
Who breaks his glass to take more light,
Makes way for storms into his rest.

Then bless thy secret growth, nor catch
At noise, but thrive unseen and dumb;
Keep clean, bear fruit, earn life, and watch,
Till the white-wingèd reapers come!

THEY ARE ALL GONE.

They are all gone into the world of light,
And I alone sit lingering here!
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast,
Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
Or those faint beams in which this hill is drest
After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days;
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy hope! and high humility!
High as the heavens above!
These are your walks, and you have shewed them me
To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous death; the jewel of the just!
Shining nowhere but in the dark;
What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
Could man outlook that mark!

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know
At first sight if the bird be flown;
But what fair dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams,
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep.

. . . . . .

FROM "CHILDHOOD."

Dear, harmless age! the short, swift span,
Where weeping virtue parts with man;
Where love without lust dwells, and bends
What way we please without self-ends.

An age of mysteries! which he
Must live twice that would God's face see;
Which angels guard, and with it play,
Angels! which foul men drive away.

PEACE.

My soul, there is a country
Afar beyond the stars,
Where stands a wingèd sentry
All skilful in the wars.
There, above noise and danger,
Sweet Peace sits, crowned with smiles,
And one born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious friend,
And (O my soul, awake)
Did in pure love descend,
To die here for thy sake.
If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of peace,
The rose that cannot wither,
The fortress, and thy ease.
Leave, then, thy foolish ranges;
For none can thee secure
But One, who never changes,
Thy God, thy Life, thy Cure.

THE PURSUIT.

Lord! what a busy, restless thing,
Hast thou made man!
Each day and hour he is on wing,
Rests not a span.
Then having lost the sun and light,
By clouds surprised,
He keeps a commerce in the night
With air disguised.
Hadst thou given to this active dust
A state untired,
The lost son had not left the husk,
Nor home desir'd.
That was thy secret, and it is
Thy mercy too;
For when all fails to bring to bliss,
Then this must do.
Ah, Lord! and what a purchase will that be,
To take us sick, that sound would not take thee!

FROM "ST. MARY MAGDALEN."

Cheap, mighty art! her art of love,
Who loved much, and much more could move;
Her art! whose memory must last
Till truth through all the world be past;
Till his abused, despisèd flame
Return to heaven from whence it came,
And send a fire down, that shall bring
Destruction on his ruddy wing.

Her art! whose pensive, weeping eyes
Were once sin's loose and tempting spies;
But now are fixèd stars, whose light
Helps such dark stragglers to their sight.

Self-boasting Pharisee! how blind
A judge wert thou, and how unkind!
It was impossible, that thou,
Who wert all false, should'st true grief know.
Is't just to judge her faithful tears
By that foul rheum thy false eye wears?
"This woman," say'st thou, "is a sinner!"
And sate there none such at thy dinner?
Go, leper, go! wash till thy flesh
Comes like a child's, spotless and fresh;
He is still leprous that still paints:
Who saint themselves, they are no saints.

FROM THE "CHRISTIAN POLITICIAN."

Come, then, rare politicians of the time,
Brains of some standing, elders in our clime,
See here the method. A wise, solid state
Is quick in acting, friendly in debate,
Joint in advice, in resolutions just,
Mild in success, true to the common trust.
It cements ruptures, and by gentle hand
Allays the heat and burnings of a land.
Religion guides it; and in all the tract
Designs so twist, that Heaven confirms the act.
If from these lists you wander, as you steer,
Look back, and catechize your actions here.
These are the marks to which true statesmen tend,
And greatness here with goodness hath one end.

PROVIDENCE.

Sacred and secret hand!
By whose assisting, swift command
The angel shewed that holy well,
Which freed poor Hagar from her fears,
And turn'd to smiles the begging tears
Of young, distressèd Ishmael.

How, in a mystic cloud
Which doth thy strange, sure mercies shroud,
Dost thou convey man food and money,
Unseen by him till they arrive
Just at his mouth, that thankless hive,
Which kills thy bees, and eats thy honey!

If I thy servant be,
Whose service makes even captives free,
A fish shall all my tribute pay.
The swift-winged raven shall bring me meat,
And I like flowers shall still go neat,
As if I knew no month but May.

I will not fear what man,
With all his plots and power, can.
Bags that wax old may plundered be;
But none can sequester or let
A state that with the sun doth set,
And comes next morning fresh as he.

Poor birds this doctrine sing,
And herbs which on dry hills do spring,
Or in the howling wilderness
Do know thy dewy morning hours,
And watch all night for mists or showers,
Then drink and praise thy bounteousness.

May he for ever die
Who trusts not thee! but wretchedly
Hunts gold and wealth, and will not lend
Thy service nor his soul one day!

May his crown, like his hopes be clay;
And, what he saves, may his foes spend!

If all my portion here,
The measure given by thee each year,
Were by my causeless enemies
Usurped, it never should me grieve
Who know how well thou canst relieve
Whose hands are open as thine eyes.

Great King of love and truth!
Who would'st not hate my froward youth,
And wilt not leave me when grown old;
Gladly will I, like Pontic sheep,
Unto my wormwood diet keep,
Since thou hast made thy arm my fold.

SUNDAYS.

Bright shadows of true rest! some shoots of bliss;
Heaven once a week;
The next world's gladness prepossest in this;
A day to seek;
Eternity in time; the steps by which
We climb above all ages; lamps that light
Man through his heap of dark days; and the rich
And full redemption of the whole week's flight!

The pulleys unto headlong man; time's bower;
The narrow way;
Transplanted Paradise; God's walking-hour;
The cool o'th' day!
The creature's jubilee; God's parle with dust;
Heaven here; man on those hills of mirth and flowers;
Angels descending; the returns of trust;
A gleam of glory after six-days-showers!

The church's love-feasts; time's prerogative,
And interest
Deducted from the whole; the combs and hive,
And home of rest;
The milky way chalked out with suns; a clue,
That guides through erring hours; and in full story
A taste of heaven on earth; the pledge and cue
Of a full feast; and the out-courts of glory.

THE SHOWER.

Waters above! eternal springs!
The dew that silvers the Dove's wings!
O welcome, welcome, to the sad!
Give dry dust drink, drink that makes glad.
Many fair evenings, many flowers
Sweetened with rich and gentle showers,
Have I enjoyed; and down have run
Many a fine and shining sun;
But never, till this happy hour,
Was blest with such an evening shower!

FROM "RULES AND LESSONS."

When first thy eyes unveil, give thy soul leave
To do the like; our bodies but forerun
The spirit's duty. True hearts spread and heave
Unto their God, as flowers do to the sun.
Give him thy first thoughts then; so shalt thou keep
Him company all day, and in him sleep.

Yet never sleep the sun up. Prayer should
Dawn with the day. There are set, awful hours
'Twixt heaven and us. The manna was not good

After sun-rising; far-day sullies flowers.
Rise to prevent the sun; sleep doth sins glut,
And heaven's gate opens when this world's is shut.

. . . . .

Serve God before the world; let him not go,
Until thou hast a blessing; then resign
The whole unto him; and remember who
Prevail'd by wrestling ere the sun did shine.
Pour oil upon the stones; weep for thy sin;
Then journey on, and have an eye to heaven.

. . . . .

When the world's up, and every swarm abroad,
Keep thou thy temper; mix not with each clay;
Dispatch necessities; life hath a load
Which must be carried on, and safely may,
Yet keep those cares without thee, let the heart
Be God's alone, and choose the better part.

. . . . .

To God, thy country, and thy friend be true;
If priest and people change, keep thou thy ground.
Who sells religion is a Judas Jew;
And, oaths once broke, the soul cannot be sound.
The perjurer's a devil let loose: what can
Tie up his hands, that dares mock God and man?

.

Seek not the same steps with the crowd; stick thou
To thy sure trot; a constant, humble mind
Is both his own joy, and his Maker's too;
Let folly dust it on, or lag behind.
A sweet self-privacy in a right soul
Outruns the earth, and lines the utmost pole.

To all that seek thee bear an open heart;
Make not thy breast a labyrinth or trap;
If trials come, this will make good thy part,
For honesty is safe, come what can hap;
It is the good man's feast, the prince of flowers,
Which thrives in storms, and smells best after showers.

. . . . .

Spend not an hour so as to weep another,
For tears are not thine own; if thou giv'st words,
Dash not with them thy friend, nor heaven; oh, smother
A viperous thought; some syllables are swords.
Unbitted tongues are in their presence double;
They shame their owners, and their hearers trouble.

. . . . .

When night comes, list thy deeds; make plain the way
'Twixt heaven and thee; block it not with delays;
But perfect all before thou sleep'st; then say,
"There's one sun more strung on my bead of days."
What's good score up for joy; the bad well scann'd
Wash off with tears, and get thy Master's hand.

Thy accounts thus made, spend in the grave one hour
Before thy time; be not a stranger there,
Where thou may'st sleep whole ages; life's poor flower
Lasts not a night sometimes. Bad spirits fear
This conversation; but the good man lies
Entombèd many days before he dies.

Being laid, and dressed for sleep, close not thy eyes
Up with thy curtains; give thy soul the wing
In some good thoughts; so when thy day shall rise,
And thou unrakest thy fire, those sparks will bring
New flames; besides where these lodge, vain heats mourn
And die; that bush, where God is, shall not burn.

TO HIS BOOKS.

Bright books! the pérspectives to our weak sights,
The clear projections of discerning lights,
Burning and shining thoughts, man's posthume day,
The track of fled souls, and their milky way,
The dead alive and busy, the still voice
Of énlarged spirits, kind Heaven's white decoys!
Who lives with you lives like those knowing flowers,
Which in commérce with light spend all their hours;
Which shut to clouds, and shadows nicely shun,
But with glad haste unveil to kiss the sun.
Beneath you all is dark, and a dead night,
Which whoso lives in, wants both health and sight.
By sucking you, the wise, like bees, do grow
Healing and rich, though this they do most slow,
Because most choicely; for as great a store
Have we of books as bees of herbs, or more:
And the great task to try, then know, the good,
To discern weeds, and judge of wholesome food,
Is a rare scant performance. For man dies
Oft ere 'tis done, while the bee feeds and flies.
But you were all choice flowers; all set and dressed
By old sage florists, who well knew the best;
And I amidst you all am turned a weed,
Not wanting knowledge, but for want of heed.
Then thank thyself, wild fool, that would'st not be
Content to know — what was too much for thee!

LIKE AS A NURSE.

Even as a nurse, whose child's impatient pace
Can hardly lead his feet from place to place,
Leaves her fond kissing, sets him down to go,
Nor does uphold him for a step or two;
But when she finds that he begins to fall,
She holds him up and kisses him withal;
So God from man sometimes withdraws his hand
Awhile, to teach his infant faith to stand;
But when He sees his feeble strength begin
To fail, He gently takes him up again.

JONES VERY.

NATURE.

THE bubbling brook doth leap when I come by,
Because my feet find measure with its call;
The birds know when the friend they love is nigh,
For I am known to them, both great and small.
The flower that on the lonely hill-side grows
Expects me there when spring its bloom has given;
And many a tree and bush my wanderings knows,
And e'en the clouds and silent stars of heaven;
For he who with his Maker walks aright,
Shall be their lord as Adam was before;
His ear shall catch each sound with new delight,
Each object wear the dress that then it wore;
And he, as when erect in soul he stood,
Hear from his Father's lips that all is good.

THE WORLD.

'TIS all a great show,
The world that we're in —
None can tell when 'twas finished,
None saw it begin;
Men wander and gaze through
Its courts and its halls,
Like children whose love is
The picture-hung walls.

There are flowers in the meadow,
There are clouds in the sky —
Songs pour from the woodland,
The waters glide by:
Too many, too many
For eye or for ear,
The sights that we see,
And the sounds that we hear.

A weight as of slumber
Comes down on the mind;
So swift is life's train
To its objects we're blind;
I myself am but one
In the fleet-gliding show —
Like others I walk,
But know not where I go.

One saint to another
I heard say "How long?"
I listened, but nought more
I heard of his song;
The shadows are walking
Through city and plain, —
How long shall the night
And its shadow remain?

How long ere shall shine,
In this glimmer of things,
The light of which prophet
In prophecy sings?
And the gates of that city
Be open, whose sun
No more to the west
Its circuit shall run!

HOME AND HEAVEN.

WITH the same letter heaven and home begin,
And the words dwell together in the mind;
For they who would a home in heaven win,
Must first a heaven in home begin to find.
Be happy here, yet with a humble soul
That looks for perfect happiness in heaven;

For what thou hast is earnest of the whole
Which to the faithful shall at last be given.
As once the patriarch, in a vision blessed,
Saw the swift angels hastening to and fro,
And the lone spot whereon he lay to rest
Became to him the gate of heaven below;
So may to thee, when life itself is done,
Thy home on earth and heaven above be one.

EDMUND WALLER.

OLD AGE AND DEATH.

THE seas are quiet when the winds give o'er;
So calm are we when passions are no more.
For then we know how vain it was to boast
Of fleeting things, too certain to be lost.

Clouds of affection from our younger eyes
Conceal that emptiness which age descries.
The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that time has made.

Stronger by weakness, wiser men become,
As they draw near to their eternal home.
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

THE ROSE.

Go, lovely rose!
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her that's young,
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired;
Bid her come forth —
Suffer herself to be desired.
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die, that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee —
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair

ON A GIRDLE.

THAT which her slender waist confined
Shall now my joyful temples bind:
No monarch but would give his crown,
His arms might do what this has done.

It was my heaven's extremest sphere,
The pale which held that lovely dear,
My joy, my grief, my hope, my love,
Did all within this circle move.

A narrow compass, and yet there
Dwelt all that's good and all that's fair;
Give me but what this riband bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round.

AUGUSTA WEBSTER.

FROM "A PREACHER."

I KNOW not how it is;
I take the faith in earnest, I believe,
Even at happy times I think I love,
I try to pattern me upon the type
My Master left us, am no hypocrite
Playing my soul against good men's applause,
Nor monger of the Gospel for a cure,
But serve a Master whom I chose because
It seemed to me I loved Him, whom till now
My longing is to love; and yet I feel
A falseness somewhere clogging me. I seem
Divided from myself; I can speak words
Of burning faith and fire myself with them;
I can, while upturned faces gaze on me
As if I were their Gospel manifest,
Break into unplanned turns as natural
As the blind man's cry for healing, pass beyond
My bounded manhood in the earnestness
Of a messenger from God. And then I come
And in my study's quiet find again
The callous actor who, because long since
He had some feelings in him like the talk
The book puts in his mouth, still warms his pit
And even, in his lucky moods, himself,
With the passion of his part, but lays aside
His heroism with his satin suit
And thinks "the part is good and well conceived
And very natural — no flaw to find"
And then forgets it.
Yes, I preach to others
And am — I know not what — a castaway?
No, but a man who feels his heart asleep,
As he might feel his hand or foot.

. . . . . .

To-night now I might triumph. Not a breath
But shivered when I pictured the dead soul
Awakening when the body dies, to know
Itself has lived too late; and drew in long
With yearning when I showed how perfect love
Might make Earth's self be but an earlier Heaven.
And I may say and not be over-bold,
Judging from former fruits, "Some one to-night
Has come more near to God, some one has felt
What it may mean to love Him, some one learned
A new great horror against death and sin,
Some one at least — it may be many."

. . . . . .

And yet, I know not why it is, this knack
Of sermon-making seems to carry me
Athwart the truth at times before I know —
In little things at least; thank God the greater
Have not yet grown, by the familiar use,
Such puppets of a phrase as to slip by
Without clear recognition. Take to-night —
I preached a careful sermon, gravely planned,

All of it written. Not a line was meant
To fit the mood of any differing
From my own judgment: not the less I find —
(I thought of it coming home while my good Jane
Talked of the Shetland pony I must get
For the boys to learn to ride:) yes, here it is,
And here again on this page — blame by rote,
Where by my private judgment I blame not.
"We think our own thoughts on this day," I said,
"Harmless it may be, kindly even, still
Not Heaven's thoughts — not Sunday thoughts I'll say."
Well now, do I, now that I think of it,
Advise a separation of our thoughts
By Sundays and by week-days, Heaven's and ours?
By no means, for I think the bar is bad.
I'll teach my children "Keep all thinkings pure,
And think them when you like, if but the time
Is free to any thinking. Think of God
So often that in anything you do
It cannot seem you have forgotten Him,
Just as you would not have forgotten us,
Your mother and myself, although your thoughts
Were not distinctly on us, while you played;
And, if you do this, in the Sunday's rest
You will most naturally think of Him."

. . . . .

Then here again "the pleasures of the world
That tempt the younger members of my flock."
Now I think really that they've not enough
Of these same pleasures. Gray and joyless lives
A many of them have, whom I would see
Sharing the natural gayeties of youth.
I wish they'd more temptations of the kind.

Now Donne and Allan preach such things as these
Meaning them and believing. As for me,
What did I mean? Neither to feign nor teach
A Pharisaic service. 'Twas just this,
That there are lessons and rebukes long made
So much a thing of course that, unobserving,
One sets them down as one puts dots to *i*'s,
Crosses to *t*'s.

[*From A Painter.*]

THE ARTIST'S DREAD OF BLINDNESS.

How one can live on beauty and be rich
Having only that! — a thing not hard to find,
For all the world is beauty. We know that,
We painters, we whom God shows how to see.
We have beauty ours, we take it where we go.
Ay, my wise critics, rob me of my bread,
You can do that, but of my birthright, no.
Imprison me away from skies and seas,
And the open sight of earth and her rich life,
And the lesson of a face or golden hair:
I'll find it for you on a whitewashed wall,
Where the slow shadows only change so much
As shows the street has different darknesses
At noontime and at twilight.

Only that
Could make me poor of beauty which I dread
Sometimes, I know not why, save that it is
The one thing which I could not bear, not bear
Even with Ruth by me, even for Ruth's sake —
If this perpetual plodding with the brush
Should blind my fretted eyes!

ON THE LAKE.

A SUMMER mist on the mountain heights,
A golden haze in the sky,
A glow on the shore of sleeping lights,
And shadows lie heavily.

Far in the valley the town lies still,
Dreaming asleep in the glare,
Dreamily near purs the drowsy rill,
Dreams are afloat in the air.

Dreaming above us the languid sky,
Dreaming the slumbering lake,
And we who rest floating listlessly,
Say, love, do we dream or wake?

THE GIFT.

O HAPPY glow, O sun-bathed tree,
O golden-lighted river,
A love-gift has been given me,
And which of you is giver?

I came upon you something sad,
Musing a mournful measure,
Now all my heart in me is glad
With a quick sense of pleasure.

I came upon you with a heart
Half-sick of life's vexed story,
And now it grows of you a part,
Steeped in your golden glory.

A smile into my heart has crept
And laughs through all my being,
New joy into my life has leapt,
A joy of only seeing!

O happy glow, O sun-bathed tree,
O golden-lighted river,
A love-gift has been given me,
And which of you is giver?

TWO MAIDENS.

Two maidens listening to the sea —
The younger said "The waves are glad,
The waves are singing as they break."
The elder spake:
"Sister, their murmur sounds to me
So very sad."

Two maidens looking at a grave —
One smiled, "A place of happy sleep.
It would be happy if I slept."
The younger wept:
"Oh, save me from the rest you crave,
So lone, so deep."

Two maidens gazing into life —
The younger said, "It is so fair,
So warm with light and love and pride."
The elder sighed:
"It seems to me so vexed with strife,
So cold and bare."

Two maidens face to face with death:
The elder said, "With quiet bliss
Upon his breast I lay my head."
The younger said:
"His kiss has frozen all my breath,
Must I be his?"

CHARLES WESLEY.

STANZAS FROM "THE TRUE USE OF MUSIC."

Listed into the cause of sin,
Why should a good be evil?
Music, alas! too long has been
Pressed to obey the devil —
Drunken, or lewd, or light, the lay
Flowed to the soul's undoing —
Widened, and strewed with flowers, the way
Down to eternal ruin.

Who on the part of God will rise,
Innocent sound recover —
Fly on the prey, and take the prize,
Plunder the carnal lover —
Strip him of every moving strain,
Every melting measure —
Music in virtue's cause retain,
Rescue the holy pleasure?

Come, let us try if Jesus' love
Will not as well inspire us;
This is the theme of those above —
This upon earth shall fire us.
Say, if your hearts are tuned to sing
Is there a subject greater?
Harmony all its strains may bring;
Jesus' name is sweeter.

THE ONLY LIGHT.

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,
Christ, the true, the only Light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise,
Triumph o'er the shades of night!
Day-spring from on high, be near!
Day-star, in my heart appear!

Dark and cheerless is the morn
Unaccompanied by Thee;
Joyless is the day's return
Till Thy mercy's beams I see;
Till they inward light impart,
Glad my eyes and warm my heart.

Visit, then, this soul of mine,
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief
Fill me, Radiancy Divine,
Scatter all my unbelief!
More and more Thyself display,
Shining to the perfect day.

JESUS, LOVER OF MY SOUL.

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is nigh!
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past:
Safe into Thy haven guide —
O receive my soul at last!

Other refuge have I none —
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee:
Leave, ah! leave me not alone —
Still support and comfort me.
All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring:
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.

Wilt Thou not regard my call?
Wilt Thou not regard my prayer?
Lo! I sink, I faint, I fall —
Lo! on Thee I cast my care;
Reach me out Thy gracious hand,
While I of Thy strength receive!
Hoping against hope I stand —
Dying, and behold I live.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want —
More than all in Thee I find;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.
Just and holy is Thy name —
I am all unrighteousness;
False, and full of sin I am: —
Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,—
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound —
Make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the fountain art —
Freely let me take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart —
Rise to all eternity.

COME, LET US ANEW.

Come, let us anew our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year,
And never stand still, till the Master appear.

His adorable will let us gladly fulfil,
And our talents improve,
By the patience of hope, and the labor of love.

Our life is a dream; our time, as a stream,
Glides swiftly away;
And the fugitive moment refuses to stay.

The arrow is flown; the moment is gone;
The millennial year
Rushes on to our view, and eternity's here.

O that each in the day of his coming may say,
"I have fought my way through;
I have finished the work thou didst give me to do."

O that each, from his Lord, may receive the glad word,
"Well and faithfully done;
"Enter into my joy, and sit down on my throne."

ELLA WHEELER.

SECRETS.

Think not some knowledge rests with thee alone.
Why, even God's stupendous secret, Death,
We one by one, with our expiring breath,
Do, pale with wonder, seize and make our own.
The bosomed treasures of the earth are shown
Despite her careful hiding; and the air
Yields its mysterious marvels in despair,
To swell the mighty storehouse of things known.

In vain the sea expostulates and raves;
It cannot cover from the keen world's sight
The curious wonders of its coral caves.
And so, despite thy caution or thy tears,
The prying fingers of detective years
Shall drag thy secret out into the light.

BLANCO WHITE.

TO NIGHT.

MYSTERIOUS Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name;
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath the curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find,
While fly, and leaf, and insect lay revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou madest us blind!
Why do we, then, shun Death with anxious strife?—
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

◆

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

TO AN EARLY PRIMROSE.

MILD offspring of a dark and sullen sire!
Whose modest form, so delicately fine,
Was nursed in whirling storms,
And cradled in the winds.

Thee when young Spring first questioned Winter's sway,
And dared the sturdy blusterer to the fight,
Thee on this bank he threw
To mark his victory.

In this low vale, the promise of the year,
Serene, thou openest to the nipping gale,
Unnoticed and alone,
Thy tender elegance.

So virtue blooms, brought forth amid the storms
Of chill adversity, in some lone walk
Of life she rears her head,
Obscure and unobserved;
While every bleaching breeze that on her blows,
Chastens her spotless purity of breast,
And hardens her to bear
Serene the ills of life.

SOLITUDE.

IT is not that my lot is low,
That bids this silent tear to flow;
It is not grief that bids me moan,
It is that I am all alone.

In woods and glens I love to roam,
When the tired hedger hies him home;
Or by the woodland pool to rest,
When pale the star looks on its breast.

Yet when the silent evening sighs,
With hallowed airs and symphonies,
My spirit takes another tone,
And sighs that it is all alone.

The autumn leaf is sere and dead,
It floats upon the water's bed;
I would not be a leaf, to die
Without recording sorrow's sigh!

The woods and winds, with sudden wail,
Tell all the same unvaried tale;
I've none to smile when I am free,
And when I sigh, to sigh with me.

Yet in my dreams a form I view,
That thinks on me, and loves me too;
I start, and when the vision's flown,
I weep that I am all alone.

ODE TO DISAPPOINTMENT.

Come, Disappointment, come!
Not in thy terrors clad;
Come in thy meekest, saddest guise;
Thy chastening rod but terrifies
The restless and the bad.
But I recline
Beneath thy shrine,
And round my brow resigned, thy peaceful cypress twine.

Though Fancy flies away
Before thy hollow tread,
Yet Meditation in her cell;
Hears with faint eye the lingering knell,
That tells her hopes are dead;
And though the tear
By chance appear,
Yet she can smile, and say, My all was not laid here.

Come, Disappointment, come!
Though from Hope's summit hurled,
Still, rigid nurse, thou art forgiven,
For thou severe wert sent from heaven
To wean me from the world;
To turn my eye
From vanity,
And point to scenes of bliss that never, never die.

What is this passing scene!
A peevish April day!
A little sun — a little rain,
And then night sweeps along the plain,
And all things fade away.
Man (soon discussed)
Yields up his trust,
And all his hopes and fears lie with him in the dust.

Oh, what is beauty's power?
It flourishes and dies;
Will the cold earth its silence break,
To tell how soft, how smooth a cheek
Beneath its surface lies?
Mute, mute is all
O'er beauty's fall;
Her praise resounds no more when mantled in the pall.

The most beloved on earth
Not long survives to-day;
So music past is obsolete,
And yet 'twas sweet, 'twas passing sweet;
But now 'tis gone away.
Thus does the shade
In memory fade,
When in forsaken tomb the form beloved is laid.

Then since this world is vain,
And volatile and fleet,
Why should I lay up earthly joys,
Where rust corrupts, and moth destroys,
And cares and sorrows eat?
Why fly from ill
With anxious skill,
When soon this hand will freeze, this throbbing heart be still?

Come, Disappointment, come!
Thou art not stern to me;
Sad monitress! I own thy sway,
A votary sad in early day,
I bend my knee to thee.
From sun to sun
My race will run,
I only bow and say, My God, Thy will be done.

THE STANZA ADDED TO WALLER'S "ROSE."

YET, though thou fade,
From thy dead leaves let fragrance rise;
And teach the maid,
That goodness Time's rude hand defies,
That virtue lives when beauty dies.

TO MISFORTUNE.

MISFORTUNE, I am young,—my chin is bare,
And I have wondered much when men have told
How youth was free from sorrow and from care,
That thou should'st dwell with me, and leave the old.
Sure dost not like me! — Shrivelled hag of hate,
My phiz, and thanks to thee, is sadly long;
I am not either, beldame, over strong;
Nor do I wish at all to be thy mate,
For thou, sweet Fury, art my utter hate.
Nay, shake not thus thy miserable pate;
I am yet young, and do not like thy face;
And lest thou should'st resume the wild-goose chase,
I'll tell thee something all thy heat to assuage,
Thou wilt not hit my fancy in my age.

A LITTLE BEFORE DEATH.

YES, 'twill be over soon. — This sickly dream
Of life will vanish from my feverish brain;
And death my wearied spirit will redeem
From this wild region of unvaried pain.
Yon brook will glide as softly as before,—
Yon landscape smile,—yon golden harvest grow,
Yon sprightly lark on mounting wing will soar,
When Henry's name is heard no more below.
I sigh when all my youthful friends caress,
They laugh in health, and future evils brave;
Them shall a wife and smiling children bless,
While I am mouldering in my silent grave.
God of the just, — Thou gavest the bitter cup;
I bow to thy behest, and drink it up.

ADELINE D. T. WHITNEY.

EQUINOCTIAL.

THE sun of life has crossed the line;
The summer-shine of lengthened light
Faded and failed, till where I stand
'Tis equal day and equal night.

One after one, as dwindling hours,
Youth's glowing hopes have dropped away,
And soon may barely leave the gleam
That coldly scores a winter's day.

I am not young; I am not old;
The flush of morn, the sunset calm,
Paling and deepening, each to each,
Meet midway with a solemn charm.

One side I see the summer fields
Not yet disrobed of all their green;
While westerly, along the hills
Flame the first tints of frosty sheen.

Ah, middle point, where cloud and storm
Make battle-ground of this, my life!

Where, even-matched, the night and day
Wage round me their September strife!

I bow me to the threatening gale;
I know when that is overpast,
Among the peaceful harvest days,
An Indian summer comes at last!

BEHIND THE MASK.

It was an old, distorted face,—
An uncouth visage, rough and wild,—
Yet, from behind, with laughing grace,
Peeped the fresh beauty of a child.

And so, contrasting strange to-day,
My heart of youth doth inly ask
If half earth's wrinkled grimness may
Be but the baby in the mask.

Behind gray hairs and furrowed brow
And withered look that life puts on,
Each, as he wears it, comes to know
How the child hides, and is not gone.

For while the inexorable years
To saddened features fit their mould,
Beneath the work of time and tears
Waits something that will not grow old!

The rifted pine upon the hill,
Scarred by the lightning and the wind,
Through bolt and blight doth nurture still
Young fibres underneath the rind;

And many a storm-blast, fiercely sent,
And wasted hope, and sinful stain,
Roughen the strange integument
The struggling soul must wear in pain;

Yet when she comes to claim her own,
Heaven's angel, happily, shall not ask
For that last look the world hath known,
But for the face behind the mask!

THE THREE LIGHTS.

My window that looks down the west,
Where the cloud-thrones and islands rest,
One evening, to my random sight,
Showed forth this picture of delight.

The shifting glories were all gone;
The clear blue stillness coming on;
And the soft shade, 'twixt day and night
Held the old earth in tender light.

Up in the ether hung the horn
Of a young moon; and, newly born
From out the shadows, trembled far
The shining of a single star.

Only a hand's breadth was between:
So close they seemed, so sweet-serene,
As if in heaven some child and mother,
With peace untold, had found each other.

Then my glance fell from that fair sky
A little down, yet very nigh,
Just where the neighboring tree-tops made
A lifted line of billowy shade,—

And from the earth-dark twinkled clear
One other spark, of human cheer;
A home-smile, telling where there stood
A farmer's house beneath the wood.

Only these three in all the space;
Far telegraphs of various place.
Which seeing, this glad thought was mine,—
Be it but little candle-shine,

Or golden disk of moon that swings
Nearest of all the heavenly things,
Or world in awful distance small,
One Light doth feed and link them all!

"I WILL ABIDE IN THINE HOUSE."

Among so many, can He care?
Can special love be everywhere?
A myriad homes,—a myriad ways,—
And God's eye over every place.

Over; but *in?* The world is full;
A grand omnipotence must rule;
But is there life that doth abide
With mine own living, side by side?

So many, and so wide abroad:
Can any heart have all of God?
From the great spaces, vague and dim,
May one small household gather Him?

I asked: my soul bethought of this:—
In just that very place of his
Where He hath put and keepeth you,
God hath no other thing to do!

HEARTH-GLOW.

In the fireshine at the twilight,
The pictures that I see
Are less with mimic landscape bright
Than with life and mystery.

Where the embers flush and flicker
With their palpitating glow,
I see, fitfuller and quicker,
Heart-pulses come and go.

And here and there, with eager flame,
A little tongue of light
Upreaches earnestly to claim
A somewhat out of sight.

I know, with instinct sure and high,
A somewhat must be there;
Else should the fiery impulse die.
In ashes of despair.

Through the red tracery I discern
A parable sublime;
A solemn myth of souls that burn
In ordeals of time.

. . . . .

SUNLIGHT AND STARLIGHT.

God sets some souls in shade, alone;
They have no daylight of their own:
Only in lives of happier ones
They see the shine of distant suns.

God knows. Content thee with thy night,
Thy greater heaven hath grander light.
To-day is close; the hours are small;
Thou sit'st afar, and hast them all.

Lose the less joy that doth but blind;
Reach forth a larger bliss to find.
To-day is brief: the inclusive spheres
Rain raptures of a thousand years.

LARVÆ.

My little maiden of four years old—
No myth, but a genuine child is she,
With her bronze-brown eyes and her curls of gold—
Came, quite in disgust, one day, to me.

Rubbing her shoulder with rosy palm,
As the loathsome touch seemed yet to thrill her,
She cried, "O mother! I found on my arm
A horrible, crawling caterpillar!"

And with mischievous smile she could scarcely smother,
Yet a glance in its daring, half awed, half shy,
She added, "While they were about it, mother
I wish they'd just finished the butterfly!"

They were words to the thought of the soul that turns
From the coarser form of a partial growth,
Reproaching the infinite patience that yearns
With an unknown glory to crown them both.

Ah, look thou largely, with lenient eyes,
On whatso beside thee may creep and cling,
For the possible glory that underlies
The passing phase of the meanest thing!

What if God's great angels, whose waiting love
Beholdeth our pitiful life below
From the holy height of their heaven above,
Could n't bear with the worm till the wings should grow?

ELIZABETH H. WHITTIER.

CHARITY.

The pilgrim and stranger, who, through the day,
Holds over the desert his trackless way,
Where the terrible sands no shade have known,
No sound of life save his camel's moan,
Hears, at last, through the mercy of Allah to all,
From his tent-door, at evening, the Bedouin's call:
"Whoever thou art, whose need is great,
In the name of God, the Compassionate
And Merciful One, for thee I wait!"

For gifts, in his name, of food and rest,
The tents of Islam, of God are blest.
Thou, who hast faith in the Christ above,
Shall the Koran teach thee the Law of Love?
O Christian! — open thy heart and door, —
Cry, east and west, to the wandering poor, —
"Whoever thou art, whose need is great,
In the name of Christ, the Compassionate
And Merciful One, for thee I wait!"

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

THE BAREFOOT BOY.

Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;
From my heart I give thee joy, —
I was once a barefoot boy!
Prince thou art,— the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,

Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye, —
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

Oh, for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned in schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wild-flower's time and place.
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;
Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the ground-nut trails its vine,
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of gray hornet artisans! —
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy, —
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

Oh, for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine, on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still as my horizon grew
Larger grew my riches too;
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

Oh, for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread, —
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
On the door-stone, gray and rude!
O'er me, like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
Looped in many a wind-swung fold;
While for music came the play
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;
And, to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch; pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy.

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptisms of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil:
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

IN SCHOOL-DAYS.

Still sits the school-house by the road,
A ragged beggar sunning;
Around it still the sumachs grow,
And blackberry-vines are running.

Within, the master's desk is seen,
Deep scarred by raps official;
The warping floor, the battered seats,
The jack-knife's carved initial;

The charcoal frescoes on its wall;
Its door's worn sill, betraying
The feet that, creeping slow to school,
Went storming out to playing!

Long years ago a winter sun
Shone over it at setting;
Lit up its western window-panes,
And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,
And brown eyes full of grieving,
Of one who still her steps delayed
When all the school were leaving.

For near her stood the little boy
Her childish favor singled:
His cap pulled low upon a face
Where pride and shame were mingled.

Pushing with restless feet the snow
To right and left, he lingered;—
As restlessly her tiny hands
The blue-checked apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes; he felt
The soft hand's light caressing,
And heard the tremble of her voice,
As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word:
I hate to go above you,
Because," — the brown eyes lower fell, —
"Because, you see, I love you!"

Still memory to a gray-haired man
That sweet child-face is showing.
Dear girl! the grasses on her grave
Have forty years been growing!

He lives to learn, in life's hard school
How few who pass above him
Lament their triumph and his loss,
Like her, — because they love him.

MY PSALM.

I MOURN no more my vanished years:
Beneath a tender rain,
An April rain of smiles and tears,
My heart is young again.

The west-winds blow, and, singing low,
I hear the glad streams run;
The windows of my soul I throw
Wide open to the sun.

No longer forward nor behind
I look in hope or fear;
But, grateful take the good I find,
The best of now and here.

I plough no more a desert land,
To harvest weed and tare;
The manna dropping from God's hand
Rebukes my painful care.

I break my pilgrim staff, — I lay
Aside the toiling oar;
The angel sought so far away
I welcome at my door.

The airs of spring may never play
Among the ripening corn,
Nor freshness of the flowers of May
Blow through the autumn morn;

Yet shall the blue-eyed gentian look
Through fringèd lids to heaven,
And the pale aster in the brook
Shall see its image given:

The woods shall wear their robes of praise,
The south-wind softly sigh,
And sweet, calm days in golden haze
Melt down the amber sky.

Not less shall manly deed and word
Rebuke an age of wrong;
The graven flowers that wreathe the sword
Make not the blade less strong.

But smiting hands shall learn to heal, —
To build as to destroy;
Nor less my heart for others feel
That I the more enjoy.

All as God wills, who wisely heeds
To give or to withhold,
And knoweth more of all my needs
Than all my prayers have told!

Enough that blessings undeserved
Have marked my erring track;—
That wheresoe'er my feet have swerved,
His chastening turned me back;—

That more and more a Providence
Of love is understood,
Making the springs of time and sense
Sweet with eternal good;—

That death seems but a covered way
Which opens into light,
Wherein no blinded child can stray
Beyond the Father's sight;—

That care and trial seem at last,
Through Memory's sunset air,
Like mountain-ranges overpast,
In purple distance fair;—

That all the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm,
And all the angles of its strife
Slow rounding into calm.

And so the shadows fall apart,
And so the west-winds play;
And all the windows of my heart
I open to the day.

BARBARA FRIETCHIE.

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The cluster'd spires of Frederick stand,
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland;

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach-tree fruited deep,

Fair as a garden of the Lord,
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall,
When Lee marched over the mountain wall,

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down.

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced: the old flag met his sight.

"Halt!"—the dust-brown ranks stood fast;
"Fire!"—out blazed the rifle-blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash,
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell from the broken staff,
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window-sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

"Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag," she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirr'd
To life at that woman's deed and word.

"Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet;

All day long that free flag tossed
Over the heads of the rebel host.

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And, through the hill-gaps, sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town.

MAUD MULLER.

MAUD MULLER, on a summer's day,
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But, when she glanced to the far-off town,
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest
And a nameless longing filled her breast, —

A wish that she hardly dared to own,
For something better than she had known.

The judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade
Of the apple-trees to greet the maid;

And asked a draught from the spring that flowed
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up.
And filled for him her small tin cup,

And blushed as she gave it, looking down
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

"Thanks," said the judge, "a sweeter draught
From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered whether
The cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,
And her graceful ankles bare and brown;

And listened, while a pleased surprise
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me!
That I the judge's bride might be!

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,
And praise and toast me at his wine.

'My father should wear a broadcloth coat;
My brother should sail a painted boat.

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,
And the baby should have a new toy each day.

"And I'd feed the hungry, and clothe the poor,
And all should bless me who left our door."

The judge looked back as he climbed the hill,
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air
Show her wise and good as she is fair.

"Would she were mine, and I to-day,
Like her, a harvester of hay:

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,
And health, and quiet, and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters proud and cold,
And his mother vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well,
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,
He watched a picture come and go:

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead,

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms,
To dream of meadows and clover blooms.

And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain:
"Ah, that I were free again!

"Free as when I rode that day,
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,
And many children played round her door.

But care, and sorrow, and childbirth pain,
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot.

And she heard the little spring-brook fall
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein,

And, gazing down, with timid grace,
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls
Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinnet turned,
The tallow candle an astral burned,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,
And joy was duty, and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, "It might have been."

Alas, for maiden, alas, for judge,
For rich repiner and household drudge!

God pity them both, and pity us all,
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away!

[From The Tent on the Beach.—The Grave by the Lake.]

UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

O THE generations old
Over whom no church-bells tolled,
Christless, lifting up blind eyes
To the silence of the skies!
For the innumerable dead
Is my soul disquieted,

. . . .

Hearest thou, O of little faith,
What to thee the mountain saith,
What is whispered by the trees?—
"Cast on God thy care for these;
Trust him, if thy sight be dim;
Doubt for them is doubt of Him.

"Blind must be their close-shut eyes
Where like night the sunshine lies,
Fiery-linked the self-forged chain
Binding ever sin to pain,
Strong their prison-house of will,
But without He waiteth still.

"Not with hatred's undertow
Doth the Love Eternal flow;
Every chain that spirits wear
Crumbles in the breath of prayer;
And the penitent's desire
Opens every gate of fire.

"Still Thy love, O Christ arisen,
Yearns to reach these souls in prison!
Through all depths of sin and loss
Drops the plummet of Thy cross!
Never yet abyss was found
Deeper than that cross could sound!"

[From The Tent on the Beach.—Abraham Davenport.]

NATURE'S REVERENCE.

THE harp at Nature's advent, strung
Has never ceased to play:
The song the stars of morning sung
Has never died away.

And prayer is made, and praise is given,
By all things near and far:
The ocean looketh up to heaven,
And mirrors every star.

Its waves are kneeling on the strand,
As kneels the human knee,
Their white locks bowing to the sand,
The priesthood of the sea!

They pour their glittering treasures forth,
Their gifts of pearl they bring,
And all the listening hills of earth
Take up the song they sing.

The green earth sends her incense up
From many a mountain shrine:
From folded leaf and dewy cup
She pours her sacred wine.

The mists above the morning rills
Rise white as wings of prayer;
The altar-curtains of the hills
Are sunset's purple air.

The winds with hymns of praise are loud,
Or low with sobs of pain,—
The thunder-organ of the cloud,
The dropping tears of rain.

With drooping head and branches crossed
The twilight forest grieves,
Or speaks with tongues of Pentecost
From all its sunlit leaves.

The blue sky is the temple's arch,
Its transept earth and air,
The music of its starry march
The chorus of a prayer.

So Nature keeps the reverent frame
With which her years began,
And all her signs and voices shame
The prayerless heart of man.

THE PRESSED GENTIAN.

The time of gifts has come again,
And, on my northern window-pane,
Outlined against the day's brief light,
A Christmas token hangs in sight.
The wayside travellers, as they pass,
Mark the gray disk of clouded glass;
And the dull blankness seems, perchance,
Folly to their wise ignorance.

They cannot from their outlook see
The perfect grace it hath for me;
For there the flower, whose fringes through
The frosty breath of autumn blew,
Turns from without its face of bloom
To the warm tropic of my room,
As fair as when beside its brook
The hue of bending skies it took.

So, from the trodden ways of earth,
Seem some sweet souls who veil their worth,
And offer to the careless glance
The clouding gray of circumstance.
They blossom best where hearth-fires burn,
To loving eyes alone they turn
The flowers of inward grace, that hide
Their beauty from the world outside.

But deeper meanings come to me,
My half-immortal flower, from thee!
Man judges from a partial view,
None ever yet his brother knew;
The Eternal Eye that sees the whole
May better read the darkened soul,
And find, to outward sense denied,
The flower upon its inmost side!

MY PLAYMATE.

The pines were dark on Ramoth hill,
Their song was soft and low:
The blossoms in the sweet May wind
Were falling like the snow.

The blossoms drifted at our feet,
The orchard birds sang clear:
The sweetest and the saddest day
It seemed of all the year.

For, more to me than birds or flowers,
My playmate left her home,
And took with her the laughing spring,
The music and the bloom.

She kissed the lips of kith and kin,
She laid her hand in mine;
What more could ask the bashful boy
Who fed her father's kine?

She left us in the bloom of May:
The constant years told o'er
Their seasons with as sweet May morns,
But she came back no more.

I walk, with noiseless feet, the round
Of uneventful years;
Still o'er and o'er I sow the spring
And reap the autumn ears.

She lives where all the golden year
Her summer roses blow;
The dusky children of the sun
Before her come and go.

There haply with her jewelled hands
She smooths her silken gown, —
No more the homespun lap wherein
I shook the walnuts down.

The wild grapes wait us by the brook,
The brown nuts on the hill,
And still the May-day flowers make sweet
The woods of Follymill.

The lilies blossom in the pond,
The bird builds in the tree,
The dark pines sing on Ramoth hill
The slow song of the sea.

I wonder if she thinks of them,
And how the old time seems. —
If ever the pines of Ramoth wood,
Are sounding in her dreams.

I see her face, I hear her voice:
Does she remember mine?
And what to her is now the boy
Who fed her father's kine?

What cares she that the orioles build
For other eyes than ours, —
That other hands with nuts are filled,
And other laps with flowers?

O playmate in the golden time!
Our mossy seat is green,
Its fringing violets blossom yet,
The old trees o'er it lean.

The winds so sweet with birch and fern
A sweeter memory blow;
And there in spring the veeries sing
The songs of long ago.

And still the pines of Ramoth wood
Are moaning like the sea, —
The moaning of the sea of change
Between myself and thee!

OSCAR WILDE.

EASTER-DAY.

THE silver trumpets rang across the dome:
The people knelt upon the ground with awe:
And borne upon the necks of men I saw,
Like some great god, the Holy Lord of Rome.
Priest-like, he wore a robe more white than foam,
And, king-like, swathed himself in royal red,
Three crowns of gold rose high upon his head:
In splendor and in light the Pope passed home.
My heart stole back across wide wastes of years
To One who wandered by a lonely sea.
And sought in vain for any place of rest:
"Foxes have holes, and every bird its nest,
I, only I, must wander wearily,
And bruise my feet, and drink wine salt with tears."

MADONNA MIA.

A LILY-GIRL, not made for this world's pain,
With brown, soft hair close braided by her ears,
And longing eyes half veiled by slumberous tears
Like bluest water seen through mists of rain:
Pale cheeks whereon no love hath left its stain,
Red underlip drawn in for fear of love,
And white throat, whiter than the silvered dove,
Through whose wan marble creeps one purple vein.
Yet, though my lips shall praise her without cease,
Even to kiss her feet I am not bold,
Being o'ershadowed by the wings of awe.
Like Dante, when he stood with Beatrice
Beneath the flaming lion's breast, and saw
The seventh Crystal, and the Stair of Gold.

SONNET.

ON HEARING THE *DIES IRÆ* SUNG IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL.

NAY, Lord, not thus! white lilies in the spring,
Sad olive-groves, or silver-breasted dove,
Teach me more clearly of Thy life and love
Than terrors of red flame and thundering.
The empurpled vines dear memories of Thee bring:
A bird at evening flying to its nest,
Tells me of One who had no place of rest:
I think it is of Thee the sparrows sing.
Come rather on some autumn afternoon,
When red and brown are burnished on the leaves,
And the fields echo to the gleaner's song.
Come when the splendid fulness of the moon
Looks down upon the rows of golden sheaves,
And reap Thy harvest: we have waited long.

IMPRESSION DU MATIN.

THE Thames nocturne of blue and gold
Changed to a harmony in gray:
A barge with ochre-colored hay
Dropt from the wharf: and chill and cold

The yellow fog came creeping down
The bridges, till the houses' walls
Seemed changed to shadows, and St. Paul's
Loomed like a bubble o'er the town.

Then suddenly arose the clang
Of waking life; the streets were stirred
With country wagons: and a bird
Flew to the glistening roofs and sang.

But one pale woman all alone,
The daylight kissing her wan hair,
Loitered beneath the gas-lamps' flare,
With lips of flame and heart of stone.

SUNRISE.

THE sky is laced with fitful red,
The circling mists and shadows flee,
The dawn is rising from the sea,
Like a white lady from her bed.

And jagged brazen arrows fall
Athwart the feathers of the night,
And a long wave of yellow light
Breaks silently on tower and hall,

And spreading wide across the wold
Wakes into flight some fluttering bird,
And all the chestnut tops are stirred
And all the branches streaked with gold.

SILHOUETTES.

THE sea is flecked with bars of gray
The dull dead wind is out of tune,
And like a withered leaf the moon
Is blown across the stormy bay.

Etched clear upon the pallid sand
The black boat lies: a sailor boy
Clambers aboard in careless joy
With laughing face and gleaming hand.

And overhead the curlews cry,
Where through the dusky upland grass
The young brown-throated reapers pass,
Like silhouettes against the sky.

REQUIESCAT.

TREAD lightly, she is near
Under the snow,
Speak gently, she can hear
The daisies grow.

All her bright golden hair
Tarnished with rust,
She that was young and fair
Fallen to dust.

Lily-like, white as snow,
She hardly knew
She was a woman, so
Sweetly she grew.

Coffin-board, heavy stone,
Lie on her breast,
I vex my heart alone
She is at rest.

Peace, peace, she cannot hear
Lyre or sonnet,
All my life's buried here,
Heap earth upon it.

RICHARD HENRY WILDE.

MY LIFE IS LIKE THE SUMMER ROSE.

My life is like the summer rose
That opens to the morning sky,
But ere the shades of evening close
Is scattered on the ground — to die.
Yet on the rose's humble bed
The sweetest dews of night are shed,
As if she wept the waste to see,—
But none shall weep a tear for me!

My life is like the autumn leaf,
That trembles in the moon's pale ray!
Its hold is frail, its date is brief;
Restless, and soon to pass away!
Yet, ere that leaf shall fall and fade,
The parent tree will mourn its shade,
The winds bewail the leafless tree, —
But none shall breathe a sigh for me!

My life is like the prints which feet
Have left on Tampa's desert strand;
Soon as the rising tide shall beat,
All trace will vanish from the sand;
Yet, as if grieving to efface
All vestige of the human race,
On that lone shore loud moans the sea, —
But none, alas! shall mourn for me!

TO THE MOCKING BIRD.

Winged mimic of the woods! thou motley fool!
Who shall thy gay buffoonery describe?
Thine ever-ready notes of ridicule
Pursue thy fellows still with jest and gibe:
Wit, sophist, songster, Yorick of thy tribe,
Thou sportive satirist of Nature's school;
To thee, the palm of scoffing, we ascribe,
Arch-mocker and mad abbot of misrule!
For such thou art by day — but all night long
Thou pour'st a soft, sweet, pensive, solemn, strain,
As if thou didst, in this thy moonlight song,
Like to the melancholy Jacques complain, —
Musing on falsehood, folly, sin, and wrong,
And sighing for thy motley coat again.

HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

WHILST THEE I SEEK.

Whilst Thee I seek, protecting Power!
Be my vain wishes stilled;
And may this consecrated hour
With better hopes be filled.

Thy love the power of thought bestowed, —
To Thee my thoughts would soar:
Thy mercy o'er my life has flowed;
That mercy I adore.

In each event of life, how clear
Thy ruling hand I see!
Each blessing to my soul most dear,
Because conferred by Thee.

In every joy that crowns my days,
In every pain I bear,
My heart shall find delight in praise,
Or seek relief in prayer.

When gladness wings my favored hour,
Thy love my thoughts shall fill;
Resigned, when storms of sorrow lower,
My soul shall meet Thy will.

My lifted eye, without a tear,
The gathering storm shall see;
My steadfast heart shall know no fear;
That heart will rest on Thee.

SONNET TO HOPE.

Oh, ever skilled to wear the form we love,
To bid the shapes of fear and grief depart,—
Come, gentle Hope! with one gay smile remove
The lasting sadness of an aching heart.
Thy voice, benign enchantress! let me hear;
Say that for me some pleasures yet shall bloom;
That Fancy's radiance, Friendship's precious tear,
Shall soften or shall chase misfortune's gloom.
But come not glowing in the dazzling ray
Which once with dear illusions charmed my eye;
Oh, strew no more, sweet flatterer, on my way
The flowers I fondly thought too bright to die.
Visions less fair will soothe my pensive breast,
That asks not happiness, but longs for rest.

NATHANIEL PARKER WILLIS.

TO A CITY PIGEON.

Stoop to my window, thou beautiful dove!
Thy daily visits have touched my love.
I watch thy coming, and list the note
That stirs so low in thy mellow throat,
And my joy is high
To catch the glance of thy gentle eye.

Why dost thou sit on the heated eaves,
And forsake the wood with its freshened leaves?
Why dost thou haunt the sultry street,
When the paths of the forest are cool and sweet?
How canst thou bear
This noise of people — this sultry air?

Thou alone of the feathered race
Dost look unscared on the human face;
Thou alone, with a wing to flee,
Dost love with man in his haunts to be;
And the "gentle dove"
Has become a name for trust and love.

A holy gift is thine, sweet bird!
Thou'rt named with childhood's earliest word!
Thou'rt linked with all that is fresh and wild
In the prisoned thoughts of the city child;
And thy glossy wings
Are its brightest image of moving things.

It is no light chance. Thou art set apart,
Wisely by Him who has tamed thy heart,
To stir the love for the bright and fair
That else were sealed in this crowded air;
I sometimes dream
Angelic rays from thy pinions stream.

Come, then, ever, when daylight leaves
The page I read, to my humble eaves,
And wash thy breast in the hollow spout,
And murmur thy low sweet music out!
I hear and see
Lessons of heaven, sweet bird, in thee!

SATURDAY AFTERNOON.

I LOVE to look on a scene like this,
Of wild and careless play.
And persuade myself that I am not old,
And my locks are not yet gray;
For it stirs the blood in an old man's heart,
And makes his pulses fly,
To catch the thrill of a happy voice,
And the light of a pleasant eye.

I have walked the world for fourscore years;
And they say that I am old,
That my heart is ripe for the reaper, Death,
And my years are well-nigh told.
It is very true; it is very true;
I'm old, and "I 'bide my time:"
But my heart will leap at a scene like this,
And I half renew my prime.

Play on, play on; I am with you there,
In the midst of your merry ring:
I can feel the thrill of the daring jump,
And the rush of the breathless swing.
I hide with you in the fragrant hay,
And I whoop the smothered call,
And my feet slip up on the seedy floor,
And I care not for the fall.

I am willing to die when my time shall come,
And I shall be glad to go;
For the world at best is a weary place,
And my pulse is getting low;
But the grave is dark, and the heart will fail
In treading its gloomy way;
And it wiles my heart from its dreariness
To see the young so gay.

ON THE PICTURE OF A "CHILD TIRED OF PLAY."

TIRED of play! tired of play!
What hast thou done this livelong day?
The birds are silent, and so is the bee;
The sun is creeping up steeple and tree;
The doves have flown to the sheltering eaves,
And the nests are dark with the drooping leaves;

Twilight gathers, and day is done —
How hast thou spent it — restless one?

Playing? But what hast thou done beside,
To tell thy mother at eventide?
What promise of morn is left unbroken?
What kind word to thy playmate spoken?
Whom hast thou pitied, and whom forgiven?
How with thy faults has duty striven?
What hast thou learned by field and hill,
By greenwood path, and by singing rill?

There will come an eve to a longer day,
That will find thee tired — but not of play?
And thou wilt lean, as thou leanest now,
With drooping limbs and aching brow,
And wish the shadows would faster creep,
And long to go to thy quiet sleep.
Well were it then if thine aching brow
Were as free from sin and shame as now!

Well for thee if thy lip could tell
A tale like this of a day spent well;
If thine open hand hath relieved distress,
If thy pity hath sprung to wretchedness;
If thou hast forgiven the sore offence,
And humbled thy heart with penitence;
If Nature's voices have spoken to thee
With her holy meanings eloquently;

If every creature hath won thy love,
From the creeping worm to the brooding dove;
If never a sad, low-spoken word
Hath plead with thy human heart unheard,—
Then, when the night steals on, as now,
It will bring relief to thine aching brow,
And, with joy and peace at the thought of rest,
Thou wilt sink to sleep on thy mother's breast.

THE BURIAL OF THE CHAMPION OF HIS CLASS.

Ye've gathered to your place of prayer
  With slow and measured tread:
Your ranks are full, your mates all there —
  But the soul of one has fled.
He was the proudest in his strength,
  The manliest of ye all;
Why lies he at that fearful length,
  And ye around his pall?

Ye reckon it in days, since he
  Strode up that foot-worn aisle,
With his dark eye flashing gloriously,
  And his lip wreathed with a smile.
Oh, had it been but told you then,
  To mark whose lamp was dim —
From out yon rank of fresh-lipped men,
  Would ye have singled him?

Whose was the sinewy arm that flung
  Defiance to the ring?
Whose laugh of victory loudest rung—
  Yet not for glorying?
Whose heart, in generous deed and thought,
  No rivalry might brook,
And yet distinction claiming not?
  There lies he — go and look!

On now — his requiem is done,
  The last deep prayer is said —
On to his burial, comrades — on,
  With a friend and brother dead!
Slow — for it presses heavily —
  It is a man ye bear!
Slow, for our thoughts dwell wearily
  On the gallant sleeper there.

Tread lightly, comrades! — we have laid
His dark locks on his brow —
Like life — save deeper light and shade:
We'll not disturb them now.
Tread lightly — for 'tis beautiful,
That blue-veined eyelid's sleep,
Hiding the eye, death left so dull —
Its slumber we will keep.

Rest now! his journeying is done —
Your feet are on his sod —
Death's blow has felled your champion —
He waiteth here his God.
Ay — turn and weep — 'tis manliness
To be heart-broken here —
For the grave of one, the best of us,
Is watered by the tear.

TO GIULIA GRISI.

AFTER HEARING HER IN "ANNA BOLENA."

When the rose is brightest,
Its bloom will soonest die;
When burns the meteor brightest,
'Twill vanish from the sky.
If Death but wait until delight
O'errun the heart, like wine,
And break the cup when brimming quite,
I die — for thou hast poured to-night
The last drop into mine.

UNSEEN SPIRITS.

The shadows lay along Broadway,
'Twas near the twilight-tide —
And slowly there a lady fair
Was walking in her pride.
Alone walked she; but, viewlessly,
Walked spirits at her side.

Peace charmed the street beneath her feet,
And Honor charmed the air;
And all astir looked kind on her,
And called her good as fair —
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true —
For her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo —
But honored well are charms to sell
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair —
A slight girl, lily-pale;
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail —
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walked forlorn,
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
For this world's peace to pray;
For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
Her woman's heart gave way! —
But the sin forgiven by Christ in heaven
By man is cursed alway!

THE BELFRY PIGEON.

On the cross-beam under the Old South bell
The nest of a pigeon is builded well.
In summer and winter that bird is there,
Out and in with the morning air:
I love to see him track the street,
With his wary eye and active feet;
And I often watch him as he springs,
Circling the steeple with easy wings,
Till across the dial his shade has passed,
And the belfry edge is gained at last.
'Tis a bird I love, with its brooding note,
And the trembling throb in its mottled throat;
There's a human look in its swelling breast,
And the gentle curve of its lowly crest;
And I often stop with the fear I feel —
He runs so close to the rapid wheel.

Whatever is rung on that noisy bell —
Chime of the hour or funeral knell —
The dove in the belfry must hear it well.
When the tongue swings out to the midnight moon —
When the sexton cheerily rings for noon —
When the clock strikes clear at morning light,
When the child is waked with "nine at night"—
When the chimes play soft in the Sabbath air,
Filling the spirit with tones of prayer;
Whatever tale in the bell is heard,
He broods on his folded feet unstirred,
Or, rising half in his rounded nest,
He takes the time to smooth his breast,
Then drops again with filmèd eyes,
And sleeps as the last vibration dies.

Sweet bird! I would that I could be
A hermit in the crowd like thee!
With wings to fly to wood and glen,
Thy lot, like mine, is cast with men;
And daily, with unwilling feet,
I tread, like thee, the crowded street;
But, unlike thee, when day is o'er,
Thou canst dismiss the world and soar,
Or, at a half-felt wish for rest,
Canst smooth the feathers on thy breast,
And drop, forgetful, to thy nest.

FROM "ABSALOM."

"Alas! my noble boy! that thou shouldst die!
Thou, who wert made so beautifully fair!
That Death should settle in thy glorious eye,
And leave his stillness in this clustering hair!
How could he mark thee for the silent tomb?
My proud boy, Absalom!

"Cold is thy brow, my son! and I am chill,
As to my bosom I have tried to press thee!
How was I wont to feel my pulses thrill,
Like a rich harp-string, yearning to caress thee,
And hear thy sweet '*my father!*' from these dumb
And cold lips, Absalom!

"But death is on thee. I shall hear the gush
Of music, and the voices of the young;
And life will pass me in the mantling blush,
And the dark tresses to the soft winds flung; —
But thou no more, with thy sweet voice, shalt come
To meet me, Absalom!

"And oh! when I am stricken, and my heart,
Like a bruised reed, is waiting to be broken,
How will its love for thee, as I depart,
Yearn for thine ear to drink its last deep token!
It were so sweet, amid death's gathering gloom,
To see thee, Absalom!

"And now, farewell! 'Tis hard to give thee up,
With death so like a gentle slumber on thee; —
And thy dark sin! — Oh! I could drink the cup,
If from this woe its bitterness had won thee.
May God have called thee, like a wanderer, home,
My lost boy, Absalom!"

FORCEYTHE WILLSON.

THE OLD SERGEANT.

"COME a little nearer, doctor, — thank you, — let me take the cup;
Draw your chair up, — draw it closer, — just another little sup!
May be you may think I'm better; but I'm pretty well used up, —
  Doctor, you've done all you could do, but I'm just a going up!

"Feel my pulse, sir, if you want to, but it ain't much use to try" —
"Never say that," said the surgeon, as he smothered down a sigh;
"It will never do, old comrade, for a soldier to say die!"
  "What you say will make no difference, doctor, when you come to die.

"Doctor, what has been the matter?" "You were very faint, they say;
You must try to get to sleep now." "Doctor, have I been away?"
"Not that anybody knows of!" "Doctor, — Doctor, please to stay!
  There is something I must tell you, and you won't have long to stay!

"I have got my marching orders, and I'm ready now to go;
Doctor, did you say I fainted? — but it couldn't ha' been so, —
For as sure as I'm a sergeant, and was wounded at Shiloh,
  I've this very night been back there, on the old field of Shiloh!

"This is all that I remember: The last time the lighter came,
And the lights had all been lowered, and the noises much the same,
He had not been gone five minutes before something called my name:
  'Orderly Sergeant — Robert Burton!' — just that way it called my name.

"And I wondered who could call me so distinctly and so slow,
Knew it couldn't be the lighter, — he could not have spoken so, —
And I tried to answer, 'Here, sir!' but I couldn't make it go;
  For I couldn't move a muscle, and I couldn't make it go!

"Then I thought: It's all a nightmare, all a humbug and a bore:
Just another foolish grapevine, — and it won't come any more;
But it came, sir, notwithstanding, just the same way as before:
'Orderly Sergeant — Robert Burton!' — even plainer than before:

"That is all that I remember, till a sudden burst of light,
And I stood beside the river, where we stood that Sunday night,
Waiting to be ferried over to the dark bluffs opposite,
  When the river was perdition and all hell was opposite!

"And the same old palpitation came again in all its power,
And I heard a bugle sounding, as from some celestial tower;
And the same mysterious voice said: 'It is the eleventh hour!
  Orderly Sergeant — Robert Burton — it is the eleventh hour!'

"Doctor Austin! what day is this?" "It is Wednesday night, you know."
"Yes, — to-morrow will be New Year's, and a right good time below!
What time is it, Doctor Austin?" "Nearly twelve." "Then don't you go!
  Can it be that all this happened — all this — not an hour ago?

"There was where the gunboats opened on the dark rebellious host;
And where Webster semicircled his last guns upon the coast;
There were still the two log-houses, just the same, or else their ghost, —
And the same old transport came and took me over — or its ghost!

"And the old field lay before me all deserted far and wide;
There was where they fell on Prentiss, — there McClernand met the tide;
There was where stern Sherman rallied, and where Hurlburt's heroes died, —
Lower down, where Wallace charged them, and kept charging till he died.

"There was where Lew Wallace showed them he was of the canny kin,
There was where old Nelson thundered, and where Rousseau waded in;
There McCook sent 'em to breakfast, and we all began to win, —
There was where the grape-shot took me, just as we began to win.

"Now a shroud of snow and silence over everything was spread;
And but for this old blue mantle and the old hat on my head,
I should not have even doubted, to this moment, I was dead, —
For my footsteps were as silent as the snow upon the dead!

"Death and silence! — Death and silence! all around me as I sped!
And behold, a mighty tower, as if builded to the dead,
To the heaven of the heavens lifted up its mighty head;
Till the Stars and Stripes of heaven all seemed waving from its head!

"Round and mighty-based it towered, — up into the infinite, —
And I knew no mortal mason could have built a shaft so bright;
For it shone like solid sunshine; and a winding-stair of light
Wound around it and around it till it wound clear out of sight!

"And, behold, as I approached it, with a rapt and dazzled stare, —
Thinking that I saw old comrades just ascending the great stair,
Suddenly the solemn challenge broke, of — 'Halt, and who goes there!'
'I'm a friend,' I said, 'if you are.' 'Then advance, sir, to the stair!

"I advanced! That sentry, doctor, was Elijah Ballantyne! —
First of all to fall on Monday, after we had formed the line! —
'Welcome, my old sergeant, welcome! Welcome by that countersign!'
And he pointed to the scar there, under this old cloak of mine!

"As he grasped my hand, I shuddered, thinking only of the grave;
But he smiled and pointed upward with a bright and bloodless glaive;
'That's the way, sir, to headquarters.' What headquarters? 'Of the brave.'
'But the great tower?' 'That,' he answered, 'is the way, sir, of the brave!'

"Then a sudden shame came o'er me, at his uniform of light;
At my own so old and tattered, and at his so new and bright:
'Ah!' said he, 'you have forgotten the new uniform to-night, —
Hurry back, for you must be here at just twelve o'clock to-night!'

"And the next thing I remember, you were sitting there, and I —
Doctor, — did you hear a footstep? Hark! — God bless you all! Good-by!
Doctor, please to give my musket and my knapsack, when I die,
To my son — my son that's coming, — he won't get here till I die!

"Tell him his old father blessed him as he never did before,—
And to carry that old musket"—Hark! a knock is at the door!—
"Till the Union"—See! it opens!—"Father! Father! speak once more!"
"Bless you!" gasped the old, gray sergeant, and he lay and said no more!

JOHN WILSON (CHRISTOPHER NORTH.)

THE EVENING CLOUD.

A CLOUD lay cradled near the setting sun,
A gleam of crimson tinged its braided snow:
Long had I watched the glory moving on
O'er the still radiance of the lake below.
Tranquil its spirit seemed, and floated slow!
Even in its very motion there was rest;
While every breath of eve that chanced to blow
Wafted the traveller to the beauteous west.
Emblem, methought, of the departed soul,
To whose white robe the gleam of bliss is given;
And by the breath of mercy made to roll
Right onwards to the golden gates of heaven,
Where to the eye of faith it peaceful lies,
And tells to man his glorious destinies.

[*From the Isle of Palms.*]

THE SHIPWRECK.

BUT list! a low and moaning sound
At distance heard, like a spirit's song,
And now it reigns above, around,
As if it called the ship along.
The moon is sunk; and a clouded gray
Declares that her course is run,
And like a god who brings the day,
Up mounts the glorious sun.
Soon as his light has warmed the seas,
From the parting cloud fresh blows the breeze;
And that is the spirit whose well-known song
Makes the vessel to sail in joy along.
No fears hath she; her giant form
O'er wrathful surge, through blackening storm,
Majestically calm would go
'Mid the deep darkness white as snow!
But gently now the small waves glide
Like playful lambs o'er a mountain's side.
So stately her bearing, so proud her array,
The main she will traverse for ever and aye.
Many ports will exult at the gleam of her mast;—
Hush! hush! thou vain dreamer! this hour is her last.
Five hundred souls in one instant of dread
Are hurried o'er the deck;
And fast the miserable ship
Becomes a lifeless wreck.
Her keel hath struck on a hidden rock,
Her planks are torn asunder,
And down come her masts with a reeling shock,
And a hideous crash like thunder.
Her sails are draggled in the brine,
That gladdened late the skies,
And her pennant, that kissed the fair moonshine,
Down many a fathom lies.

Her beauteous sides, whose rainbow hues
Gleamed softly from below,
And flung a warm and sunny flush
O'er the wreaths of murmuring snow,
To the coral-rock are hurrying down,
To sleep amid colors as bright as their own.
Oh! many a dream was in the ship
An hour before her death;
And sights of home with sighs disturbed
The sleeper's long-drawn breath.
Instead of the murmur of the sea,
The sailor heard the humming-tree
Alive through all its leaves,
The hum of the spreading sycamore
That grows before his cottage door,
And the swallow's song in the eaves.
His arms enclosed a blooming boy,
Who listened with tears of sorrow and joy
To the dangers his father had passed;
And his wife — by turns she wept and smiled,
As she looked on the father of her child,
Returned to her heart at last.
He wakes at the vessel's sudden roll
And the rush of waters is in his soul.
Astounded, the reeling deck he paces,
'Mid hurrying forms and ghastly faces;
The whole ship's crew are there!
Wailing around and overhead,
Brave spirits stupefied or dead,
And madness and despair.

. . . . .

Now is the ocean's bosom bare,
Unbroken as the floating air;
The ship hath melted quite away,
Like a struggling dream at break of day.
No image meets my wandering eye,
But the new-risen sun and the sunny sky.
Though the night-shades are gone, yet a vapor dull
Bedims the waves so beautiful:
While a low and melancholy moan
Mourns for the glory that hath flown

WILLIAM WINTER.

THE WHITE FLAG.

Bring poppies for a weary mind
That saddens in a senseless din,
And let my spirit leave behind
A world of riot and of sin, —
In action's torpor deaf and blind.

Bring poppies — that I may forget!
Bring poppies — that I may not learn!
But bid the audacious sun to set,
And bid the peaceful starlight burn
O'er buried memory and regret.

Then will the slumberous grasses grow
Above the bed wherein I sleep;
While winds I love will softly blow,
And dews I love will softly weep,
O'er rest and silence hid below,

Bring poppies, — for this work is vain!
I cannot mould the clay of life.
A stronger hand must grasp the rein,
A stouter arm annul the strife.
A braver heart defy the pain.

Youth was my friend, — but Youth had wings,
And he has flown unto the day,
And left me, in a night of things,
Bewildered, on a lonesome way,
And careless what the future brings.

Let there be sleep! nor any more
The noise of useless deed or word:
While the free spirit hovers o'er
A sea where not a sound is heard—
A sea of dreams, without a shore.

Dark Angel, counselling defeat,
I see thy mournful, tender eyes:
I hear thy voice, so faint, so sweet,
And very dearly should I prize
Thy perfect peace, thy rest complete.

But is it rest to vanish hence,
To mix with earth, or sea, or air?
Is death indeed a full defence
Against the tyranny of care?
Or is it cruellest pretence?

And, if an hour of peace draws nigh,
Shall we, who know the arts of war,
Turn from the field and basely fly,
Nor take what fate reserves us for,
Because we dream 'twere sweet to die?

What shall the untried warriors do,
If we, the battered veterans, fail?
How strive, and suffer, and be true,
In storms that make our spirits quail,
Except our valor lead them through?

Though for ourselves we droop and tire,
Let us at least for them be strong.
'Tis but to bear familiar fire:
Life at the longest is not long,
And peace at last will crown desire.

So Death, I will not hear thee speak!
But I will labor — and endure
All storms of pain that time can wreak.
My flag be white because 'tis pure,
And not because my soul is weak!

HOMAGE.

White daisies on the meadow green
Present thy beauteous form to me:
Peaceful and joyful these are seen,
And peace and joy encompass thee.
I watch them, where they dance and shine,
And love them — for their charm is thine.

Red roses o'er the woodland brook
Remember me thy lovely face:
So blushing and so fresh its look,
So wild and shy its radiant grace!
I kiss them, in their coy retreat,
And think of lips more soft and sweet.

Gold arrows of the merry morn,
Shot swiftly over orient seas;
Gold tassels of the bending corn
That ripple in the August breeze;
Thy wildering smile, thy glorious hair,
And all thy power and state declare.

White, red, and gold — the awful crown
Of beauty and of virtue too!
From what a height those eyes look down
On him who proudly dares to sue!
Yet, free from self as God from sin,
Is love that loves, nor asks to win.

Let me but love thee in the flower,
The waving grass, the dancing wave,
The fragrant pomp of garden bower,
The violet of the nameless grave,
Sweet dreams by night, sweet thoughts by day, —
And time shall tire ere love decay!

Let me but love thee in the glow
When morning on the ocean shines,
Or in the mighty winds that blow,
Snow-laden, through the mountain pines —
In all that's fair, or grand or dread,
And all shall die ere love be dead!

AFTER ALL.

The apples are ripe in the orchard,
The work of the reaper is done,
And the golden woodlands redden
In the blood of the dying sun.

At the cottage-door the grandsire
Sits, pale, in his easy-chair,
While a gentle wind of twilight
Plays with his silver hair.

A woman is kneeling beside him;
A fair young head is prest,
In the first wild passion of sorrow,
Against his aged breast.

And far from over the distance
The faltering echoes come,
Of the flying blast of trumpet
And the rattling roll of drum.

Then the grandsire speaks, in a whisper, —
"The end no man can see;
But we give him to his country,
And we give our prayers to Thee."

The violets star the meadows,
The rosebuds fringe the door,
And over the grassy orchard
The pink-white blossoms pour.

But the grandsire's chair is empty,
The cottage is dark and still,
There's a nameless grave in the battle-field,
And a new one under the hill.

And a pallid, tearless woman
By the cold hearth sits alone;
And the old clock in the corner
Ticks on with a steady drone.

THE QUESTION.

Because love's sigh is but a sigh,
Doth it the less love's heart disclose?
Because the rose must fade and die,
Is it the less the lovely rose?
Because black night must shroud the day,
Shall the brave sun no more be gay?

Because chill autumn frights the birds,
Shall we distrust that spring will come?
Because sweet words are only words,
Shall love forevermore be dumb?
Because our bliss is fleeting bliss,
Shall we who love forbear to kiss?

Because those eyes of gentle mirth
Must some time cease my heart to thrill,
Because the sweetest voice on earth
Sooner or later must be still,
Because its idol is unsure,
Shall my strong love the less endure?

Ah, no! let lovers breathe their sighs,
And roses bloom, and music sound,
And passion burn in lips and eyes,
And pleasure's merry world go round:
Let golden sunshine flood the sky,
And let me love, or let me die!

WITHERED ROSES.

Not made by worth, nor marred by flaw,
Not won by good, nor lost by ill,
Love is its own and only law,
And lives and dies by its own will.
It was our fate, and not our sin,
That we should love, and love should win.

Not bound by oath, nor stayed by prayer,
Nor held by thirst of strong desire,
Love lives like fragrance in the air.
And dies as breaking waves expire.
'Twas death, not falsehood, bade us part, —
The death of love that broke my heart.

Not kind, as dreaming poets think,
Nor merciful, as sages say —
Love heeds not where its victims sink,
When once its passion ebbs away.
'Twas nature — it was not disdain —
That made thee careless of my pain.

Not thralled by law, nor ruled by right,
Love keeps no audit with the skies;
Its star, that once is quenched in night,
Has set — and never more will rise.
My soul is lost, by thee forgot;
And there's no heaven where thou art not.

But happy he, though scathed and lone,
Who sees afar love's fading wings—
Whose seared and blighted heart has known
The splendid agony it brings!
No life that is, no life to be
Can ever take the Past from me!

Red roses bloom for other lives —
Your withered leaves alone are mine;
Yet, not for all that Time survives
Would I your heavenly gift resign —
Now cold and dead, once warm and true,
The love that lived and died in you.

THE GOLDEN SILENCE.

What though I sing no other song?
What though I speak no other word?
Is silence shame? Is patience wrong? —
At least one song of mine was heard:

One echo from the mountain air,
One ocean murmur, glad and free —
One sign that nothing grand or fair,
In all this world was lost to me.

I will not wake the sleeping lyre;
I will not strain the chords of thought:
The sweetest fruit of all desire
Comes its own way, and comes unsought.

Though all the bards of earth were dead,
And all their music passed away,
What nature wishes should be said
She'll find the rightful voice to say!

Her heart is in the shimmering leaf,
The drifting cloud, the lonely sky,
And all we know of bliss or grief
She speaks, in forms that cannot die.

The mountain peaks that shine afar,
The silent stars, the pathless sea,
Are living signs of all we are,
And types of all we hope to be.

A DIRGE.

IN MEMORY OF POE.

Cold is the pæan honor sings,
And chill is glory's icy breath,
And pale the garland memory brings
To grace the iron doors of death.

Fame's echoing thunders, long and loud,
The pomp of pride that decks the pall,
The plaudits of the vacant crowd —
One word of love is worth them all!

With dew of grief our eyes are dim:
Ah, bid the tear of sorrow start;
And honor, in ourselves and him,
The great and tender human heart!

Through many a night of want and woe
His frenzied spirit wandered wild,
Till kind disaster laid him low,
And love reclaimed its wayward child.

Through many a year his fame has grown,—
Like midnight, vast; like starlight, sweet, —
Till now his genius fills a throne,
And homage makes his realm complete.

One meed of justice, long delayed,
One crowning grace his virtues crave!
Ah, take, thou great and injured shade,
The love that sanctifies the grave.

And may thy spirit, hovering nigh,
Pierce the dense cloud of darkness through,
And know, with fame that cannot die,
Thou hast the world's compassion too!

GEORGE WITHER.

HYMN FOR ANNIVERSARY MARRIAGE DAYS.

Lord, living here are we—
  As fast united yet
As when our hands and hearts by Thee
  Together first were knit.
And in a thankful song
  Now sing we will Thy praise,
For that Thou dost as well prolong
  Our loving, as our days.

Together we have now
  Begun another year;
But how much time Thou wilt allow
  Thou makest it not appear.
We, therefore, do implore
  That live and love we may.
Still so as if but one day more
  Together we should stay.

Let each of other's wealth
  Preserve a faithful care,
And of each other's joy and health
  As if one soul we were.
Such conscience let us make,
  Each other not to grieve,
As if we daily were to take
  Our everlasting leave.

The frowardness that springs
  From our corrupted kind,
Or from those troublous outward things
  Which may distract the mind,
Permit Thou not, O Lord,
  Our constant love to shake—
Or to disturb our true accord,
  Or make our hearts to ache.

But let these frailties prove
  Affection's exercise;
And let discretion teach our love
  Which wins the noblest prize.
So time, which wears away.
  And ruins all things else,
Shall fix our love on Thee for aye,
  In whom perfection dwells.

FROM "POVERTY."

The works my calling doth propose,
  Let me not idly shun;
For he whom idleness undoes,
  Is more than twice undone:
If my estate enlarge I may,
  Enlarge my love for Thee;
And though I more and more decay,
  Yet let me thankful be.

For be we poor or be we rich,
  If well employed we are,
It neither helps nor hinders much,
  Things needful to prepare;
Since God disposeth riches now,
  As manna heretofore.
The feeblest gatherer got enow,
  The strongest got no more.

Nor poverty nor wealth is that
  Whereby we may acquire
That blessed and most happy state,
  Whereto we should aspire;
But if Thy Spirit make me wise,
  And strive to do my best,
There may be in the worst of these
  A means of being blessed.

The rich in love obtain from Thee
  Thy special gifts of grace;
The poor in spirit those men be
  Who shall behold Thy face:
Lord! grant I may be one of these,
  Thus poor, or else thus rich;
E'en whether of the two Thou please,
  I care not greatly which.

FOR A WIDOWER OR WIDOW.

How near me came the hand of death,
When at my side he struck my dear,
And took away the precious breath
Which quickened my beloved peer!
  How helpless am I thereby made—
  By day how grieved, by night how sad
And now my life's delight is gone,
Alas! how am I left alone!

The voice which I did more esteem
Than music in her sweetest key,
Those eyes which unto me did seem
More comfortable than the day —
  Those now by me, as they have been!
  Shall never more be heard or seen;
But what I once enjoyed in them
Shall seem hereafter as a dream.

All earthly comforts vanish thus —
So little hold of them have we
That we from them or they from us
May in a moment ravished be;
  Yet we are neither just nor wise
  If present mercies we despise,
Or mind not how there may be made
A thankful use of what we had.

I therefore do not so bemoan,
Though these beseeming tears I drop,
The loss of my beloved one
As they that are deprived of hope;
  But in expressing of my grief
  My heart receiveth some relief,
And joyeth in the good I had,
Although my sweets are bitter made.

Lord, keep me faithful to the trust
Which my dear spouse reposed in me!
To him now dead preserve me just
In all that should performèd be;
  For though our being man and wife
  Extendeth only to this life,
Yet neither life nor death should end
The being of a faithful friend.

Those helps which I through him enjoyed,
Let Thy continual aid supply —
That, though some hopes in him are void,
I always may on Thee rely;
  And whether I shall wed again,
  Or in a single state remain,
Unto Thine honor let it be,
And for a blessing unto me.

FOR A SERVANT.

Discourage not thyself, my soul,
Nor murmur, though compelled we be
To live subjected to control!
When many others may be free;
For though the pride of some disdains
Our mean and much despisèd lot,
We shall not lose our honest pains,
Nor shall our sufferance be forgot.

To be a servant is not base,
If baseness be not in the mind,
For servants make but good the place,
Whereto their Maker them assigned:
The greatest princes do no more,
And if sincerely I obey,
Though I am now despised and poor,
I shall become as great as they.

The Lord of heaven and earth was pleased
A servant's form to undertake;
By His endurance I am eased,
And serve with gladness for His sake:
Though checked unjustly I should be,
With silence I reproofs will bear,
For much more injuréd was He
Whose deeds most worthy praises were.

He was reviled, yet naught replied,
And I will imitate the same;
For though some faults may be denied,
In part I always faulty am:
Content with meek and humble heart,
I will abide in my degree,
And act an humble servant's part,
Till God shall call me to be free.

JOHN WOLCOT (PETER PINDAR).

TO MY CANDLE.

THOU lone companion of the spectred night!
I wake amid thy friendly watchful light.
To steal a precious hour from lifeless sleep.
Hark, the wild uproar of the winds! and hark!
Hell's genius roams the regions of the dark,
And swells the thundering horrors of the deep!

From cloud to cloud the pale moon hurrying flies,
Now blackened, and now flashing through the skies;
But all is silence here, beneath thy beam.
I own I labor for the voice of praise —
For who would sink in dull oblivion's stream?
Who would not live in songs of distant days?

. . . . .

How slender now, alas! thy thread of fire!
Ah! falling — falling — ready to expire!
In vain thy struggles, all will soon be o'er.
At life thou snatchest with an eager leap;
Now round I see thy flame so feeble creep,
Faint, lessening, quivering, glimmering, now no more!
Thus shall the suns of science sink away,
And thus of beauty fade the fairest flower —
For where's the giant who to Time shall say,
"Destructive tyrant, I arrest thy power!"

CHARLES WOLFE.

TO MARY.

IF I had thought thou couldst have died,
I might not weep for thee;
But I forgot, when by thy side,
That thou couldst mortal be:
It never through my mind had passed
The time would e'er be o'er,
And I on thee should look my last,
And thou shouldst smile no more!

And still upon that face I look,
And think 'twill smile again;
And still the thought I will not brook,
That I must look in vain!
But when I speak, thou dost not say
What thou ne'er left'st unsaid;
And now I feel, as well I may,
Sweet Mary! thou art dead!

If thou wouldst stay, e'en as thou art,
All cold and all serene —
I still might press thy silent heart,
And where thy smiles have been!
While e'en thy chill, bleak corpse I have,
Thou seemest still mine own;
But there I lay thee in thy grave —
And I am now alone!

I do not think, where'er thou art,
Thou hast forgotten me;
And I, perhaps, may soothe this heart,
In thinking too of thee:

Yet there was round thee such a dawn
Of light ne'er seen before,
As fancy never could have drawn,
And never can restore!

BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE.

NOT a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly, at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeams' misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;
But he lay, like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face of the dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed,
And smoothed down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him;
But little he'll reck, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him!

But half of our heavy task was done,
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory!
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.

GO, FORGET ME.

Go, forget me — why should sorrow
O'er that brow a shadow fling?
Go, forget me — and to-morrow
Brightly smile and sweetly sing.
Smile — though I shall not be near thee,
Sing, though I shall never hear thee;
May thy soul with pleasure shine
Lasting as the gloom of mine.

Like the sun, thy presence glowing,
Clothes the meanest things in light;
And when thou, like him, art going,
Loveliest objects fade in night.
All things looked so bright about thee,
That they nothing seem without thee;
By that pure and lucid mind
Earthly things were too, refined.

Go, thou vision, wildly gleaming,
Softly on my soul that fell;
Go, for me no longer beaming —
Hope and Beauty! fare ye well!
Go, and all that once delighted
Take, and leave me all benighted —
Glory's burning, generous swell,
Fancy, and the poet's shell.

SAMUEL WOODWORTH.

THE OLD OAKEN BUCKET.

How dear to this heart are the scenes of my childhood,
When fond recollection presents them to view!—
The orchard, the meadow, the deep-tangled wildwood,
And every loved spot which my infancy knew!
The wide-spreading pond, and the mill that stood by it;
The bridge, and the rock where the cataract fell;
The cot of my father, the dairy-house nigh it;
And e'en the rude bucket that hung in the well —
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound [bucket,
The moss-covered bucket which hung in the well.

That moss-covered vessel I hailed as a treasure;
For often at noon, when returned from the field,
I found it the source of an exquisite pleasure —
The purest and sweetest that nature can yield
How ardent I seized it, with hands that were glowing,
And quick to the white-pebbled bottom it fell!
Then soon, with the emblem of truth overflowing,
And dripping with coolness, it rose from the well —
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket, arose from the well.

How sweet from the green, mossy brim to receive it,
As, poised on the curb, it inclined to my lips!
Not a full, blushing goblet could tempt me to leave it,
The brightest that beauty or revelry sips.
And now, far removed from the loved habitation,
The tear of regret will intrusively swell,
As fancy reverts to my father's plantation,
And sighs for the bucket that hangs in the well —
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket that hangs in the well!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

[*From Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey.*]

THE SOLACE OF NATURE.

THOUGH absent long,
These forms of beauty have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration: feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure; such, perhaps,
As may have had no trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life.

His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burden of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world
Is lightened; that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on, —
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame,
And even the motion of our human blood,
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

. . . . .

I have learned
To look on Nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

[*From Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey.*]

APOSTROPHE TO THE POET'S SISTER.

THOU art with me, here, upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou, my dearest friend,
My dear, dear friend, and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear sister! And this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her: 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind

Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh, then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! nor, perchance,
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence, wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came,
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love; oh, with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake.

[*From The Excursion.*]

THE PROP OF FAITH.

One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists — one only — an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, however
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power,
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good.
The darts of anguish *fix* not where the seat
Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified
By acquiescence in the Will supreme,
For time and for eternity — by faith,
Faith absolute in God, including hope,
And the defence that lies in boundless love
Of His perfections; with habitual dread
Of aught unworthily conceived, endured
Impatiently, ill-done, or left undone
To the dishonor of His holy name.
Soul of our souls, and safeguard of the world,
Sustain, Thou only canst, the sick of heart!
Restore their languid spirits, and recall
Their lost affections unto Thee and Thine!

[*From The Excursion.*]

UNDEVELOPED GENIUS.

Oh, many are the poets that are sown
By Nature! men endowed with highest gifts —
The vision, and the faculty divine —
Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse
(Which in the docile season of their youth
It was denied them to acquire, through lack
Of culture and the inspiring aid of books;
Or haply by a temper too severe;
Or a nice backwardness afraid of shame),
Nor, having e'er as life advanced, been led
By circumstance to take unto the height
The measure of themselves, these favored beings,
All but a scattered few, live out their time,
Husbanding that which they possess within,

And go to the grave unthought of. Strongest minds
Are often those of whom the noisy world hears least.

[From The Excursion.]

THE DEAF DALESMAN.

Almost at the root
Of that tall pine, the shadow of whose bare
And slender stem, while here I sit at eve,
Oft stretches towards me, like a long straight path
Traced faintly in the greensward; there beneath
A plain blue stone, a gentle dalesman lies,
From whom, in early childhood, was withdrawn
The precious gift of hearing. He grew up
From year to year in loneliness of soul;
And this deep mountain valley was to him
Soundless, with all its streams. The bird of dawn
Did never rouse this cottager from sleep
With startling summons; nor for his delight
The vernal cuckoo shouted; not for him
Murmured the laboring bee. When stormy winds
Were working the broad bosom of the lake
Into a thousand thousand sparkling waves,
Rocking the trees, or driving cloud on cloud
Along the sharp edge of yon lofty crags,
The agitated scene before his eye
Was silent as a picture: evermore
Were all things silent, wheresoe'er he moved;
Yet, by the solace of his own pure thoughts
Upheld, he duteously pursued the round
Of rural labors; the steep mountain-side
Ascended, with his staff and faithful dog;
The plough he guided, and the scythe he swayed;
And the ripe corn before his sickle fell
Among the jocund reapers. For himself,
All watchful and industrious as he was,
He wrought not; neither flock nor field he owned;
No wish for wealth had place within his mind;
Nor husband's love, nor father's hope or care.
Though born a younger brother, need was none
That from the floor of his paternal home
He should depart to plant himself anew;
And when, mature in manhood, he beheld
His parents laid in earth, no loss ensued
Of rights to him; but he remained well pleased,
By the pure bond of independent love,
An inmate of a second family,
The fellow-laborer and friend of him
To whom the small inheritance had fallen.
Nor deem that his mild presence was a weight
That pressed upon his brother's house, for books
Were ready comrades whom he could not tire,
Of whose society the blameless man
Was never satiate. Their familiar voice,
Even to old age, with unabated charm
Beguiled his leisure hours, refreshed his thoughts;
Beyond its natural elevation, raised
His introverted spirit, and bestowed
Upon his life an outward dignity
Which all acknowledged. The dark winter night,

The stormy day, had each its own resource;
Song of the muses, sage historic tale,
Science severe, or word of Holy Writ
Announcing immortality and joy
To the assembled spirits of the just,
From imperfection and decay secure.
Thus soothed at home, thus busy in the field,
To no perverse suspicion he gave way,
No languor, peevishness, nor vain complaint:
And they, who were about him, did not fail
In reverence, or in courtesy; they prized
His gentle manners; and his peaceful smiles,
The gleams of his slow-varying countenance,
Were met with answering sympathy and love.

At length, when sixty years and five were told,
A slow disease insensibly consumed
The powers of nature; and a few short steps
Of friends and kindred bore him from his home
(Yon cottage shaded by the woody crags)
To the profounder stillness of the grave.
Nor was his funeral denied the grace
Of many tears, virtuous and thoughtful grief;
Heart-sorrow rendered sweet by gratitude.
And now that monumental stone preserves
His name, and unambitiously relates
How long, and by what kindly outward aids,
And in what pure contentedness of mind,
The sad privation was by him endured.
And yon tall pine-tree, whose composing sound
Was wasted on the good man's living ear,
Hath now its own peculiar sanctity;
And, at the touch of every wandering breeze,
Murmurs, not idly, o'er his peaceful grave.

FROM "INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY."

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

. . . . .

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benedictions: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blessed;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast;
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;

But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Black misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised!
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us — cherish — and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence: truths that wake,
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

TO A YOUNG LADY,

WHO HAD BEEN REPROACHED FOR TAKING LONG WALKS IN THE COUNTRY.

DEAR child of nature, let them rail!
There is a nest in a green dale,
A harbor and a hold,
Where thou, a wife and friend, shalt see
Thy own delightful days, and be
A light to young and old.

There, healthy as a shepherd-boy,
As if thy heritage were joy,
And pleasure were thy trade,
Thou, while thy babes around thee cling,
Shalt show us how divine a thing
A woman may be made.

Thy thoughts and feelings shall not die,
Nor leave thee when gray hairs are nigh,
A melancholy slave;
But an old age serene and bright,
And lovely as a Lapland night,
Shall lead thee to thy grave.

THE DAFFODILS.

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed and gazed, but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft when on my couch I lie,
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

TWILIGHT.

Hail, Twilight, sovereign of one peaceful hour!
Not dull art thou as undiscerning Night;
But studious only to remove from sight
Day's mutable distinctions. Ancient power!
Thus did the waters gleam, the mountains lower
To the rude Briton, when, in wolf-skin vest
Here roving wild, he laid him down to rest
On the bare rock, or through a leafy bower
Looked ere his eyes were closed. By him was seen
The selfsame vision which we now behold,
At thy meek bidding, shadowy power, brought forth;
These mighty barriers, and the gulf between;
The floods,—the stars; a spectacle as old
As the beginning of the heavens and earth!

TO SLEEP.

A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by,
One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds, and seas,
Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky;
I've thought of all by turns; and still I lie
Sleepless; and soon the small bird's melodies
Must hear, first utter'd from my orchard trees;
And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,
And could not win thee, Sleep! by any stealth:
So do not let me wear to-night away:
Without thee what is all the morning's wealth?
Come, blessèd barrier betwixt day and day,
Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health!

LUCY.

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove;
A maid whom there were none to praise,
And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
Half-hidden from the eye!
—Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave, and oh!
The difference to me!

TO A DISTANT FRIEND.

Why art thou silent! Is thy love a plant
Of such weak fibre that the treacherous air
Of absence withers what was once so fair?
Is there no debt to pay, no boon to grant?

Yet have my thoughts for thee been vigilant,
Bound to thy service with unceasing care—
The mind's least generous wish a mendicant
For nought but what thy happiness could spare.

Speak!—though this soft warm heart, once free to hold
A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold

Than a forsaken bird's-nest fill'd with snow
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know!

TO A SKYLARK.

Ethereal minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?
Or while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground?
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still!

To the last point of vision, and beyond,
Mount, daring warbler! —that love-prompted strain
—'Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond—
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege! to sing
All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine,
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine;
Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam—
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home!

WE ARE SEVEN.

A simple child
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

I met a little cottage girl:
She was eight years old, she said;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That cluster'd round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad;
Her eyes were fair, and very fair;
—Her beauty made me glad.

"Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be?"
"How many? Seven in all," she said,
And wondering look'd at me.

"And where are they? I pray you tell."
She answer'd, "Seven are we;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

Two of us in the churchyard lie,
My sister and my brother;
And, in the churchyard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother."

"You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven!—I pray you tell,
Sweet maid, how this may be?"

Then did the little maid reply,
"Seven boys and girls are we;
Two of us in the churchyard lie,
Beneath the churchyard tree."

"You run about, my little maid,
Your limbs they are alive;
If two are in the churchyard laid,
Then ye are only five."

"Their graves are green, they may be seen,"
The little maid replied,
"Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,
And they are side by side.

My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem;
And there upon the ground I sit—
I sit and sing to them,

And often after sunset, sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

The first that died was little Jane;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain;
And then she went away.

So in the churchyard she was laid;
And all the summer dry,
Together round her grave we play'd,
My brother John and I.

And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.

"How many are you then," said I,
"If they two are in heaven?"
The little maiden did reply,
"O master! we are seven!

"But they are dead; those two are dead!
Their spirits are in Heaven!"
'Twas throwing words away: for still
The little maid would have her will,
And said, "Nay, we are seven!"

SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT.

She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight;
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament;
Her eyes as stars of twilight fair,
Like twilight's, too, her dusky hair;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful dawn;
A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food,
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller betwixt life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command;
And yet a spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.

THY ART BE NATURE.

A poet!—He hath put his heart to school,
Nor dares to move unpropped upon the staff
Which art hath lodged within his hand; must laugh
By precept only, and shed tears by rule!
Thy art be nature; the live current quaff,
And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,
In fear that else, when critics grave and cool
Have killed him, scorn should write his epitaph.
How does the meadow-flower its bloom unfold!
Because the lovely little flower is free
Down to its root, and in this freedom bold;
And so the grandeur of the forest-tree
Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
But from its own divine vitality.

SCORN NOT THE SONNET.

Scorn not the sonnet. Critic, you have frowned,
Mindless of its just honors: with this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
Camoëns soothed with it an exile's grief;
The sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow; a glow-worm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from fairy-land
To struggle through dark ways; and, when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
Soul-animating strains — alas, too few!

EVENING.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven is on the sea.
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder — everlastingly.
Dear child! dear girl, that walkest with me here!
If thou appearest untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not, therefore, less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year,
And worshippest at the temple's inner shrine,
God being with thee when we knew it not.

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US.

The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be
A pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn
Have sight of Proteus coming from the sea,
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

WESTMINSTER BRIDGE.

Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This city now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

TO THE CUCKOO.

O BLITHE new-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice:
O cuckoo! shall I call thee bird,
Or but a wandering voice?

While I am lying on the grass,
Thy loud note smites my ear!
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
At once far off and near!

I hear thee babbling to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers;
And unto me thou bringest a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the spring!
Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery.

The same whom in my school-boy days
I listened to; that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush and tree and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green;
And thou wert still a hope, a love;
Still longed for, never seen!

And I can listen to thee yet;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed bird! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, fairy place;
That is fit home for thee!

SIR HENRY WOTTON.

A HAPPY LIFE.

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armor is his honest thought
And simple truth his utmost skill!

Whose passions not his masters are,
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Not tied unto the world with care
Of public fame, or private breath;

Who envies none that chance doth raise
Or vice; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good:

Who hath his life from rumors freed,
Whose conscience is his strong retreat:
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make accusers great;

Who God doth late and early pray
More of his grace than gifts to lend;
And entertains the harmless day
With a well-chosen book or friend:

—This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise, or fear to fall;
Lord of himself, though not of lands;
And having nothing, yet hath all.

SIR THOMAS WYATT.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ONE HE WOULD LOVE.

A FACE that should content me wondrous well,
Should not be fair, but lovely to behold;
With gladsome cheer, all grief for to expel;
With sober looks so would I that it should
Speak without words, such words as none can tell;
The tress also should be of crispèd gold.
With wit, and these, might chance I might be tied,
And knit again the knot that should not slide.

A LOVER'S PRAYER.

DISDAIN me not without desert,
Nor leave me not so suddenly;
Since well ye wot that in my heart
I mean ye not but honestly.

Refuse me not without cause why,
Nor think me not to be unjust;
Since that by lot of fantasy,
This careful knot needs knit I must.

Mistrust me not, though some there be
That fain would spot my steadfastness.
Believe them not, since that ye see
The proof is not as they express.

Forsake me not, till I deserve;
Nor hate me not, till I offend,
Destroy me not, till that I swerve;
But since ye know what I intend,

Disdain me not, that am your own;
Refuse me not that am so true;
Mistrust me not, till all be known;
Forsake me not now for no new.

PLEASURE MIXED WITH PAIN.

VENOMOUS thorns that are so sharp and keen
Bear flowers we see, full fresh and fair of hue:
Poison is also put in medicine,
And unto man his health doth oft renew.
The fire that all things eke consumeth clean,
May hurt and heal: then if that this be true,
I trust some time my harm may be my health,
Since every woe is joinèd with some wealth.

EDWARD YOUNG.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT I.

PROCRASTINATION, AND FORGETFULNESS OF DEATH.

ALL promise is poor dilatory man,
And that through every stage: when young, indeed,
In full content we sometimes nobly rest,
Unanxious for ourselves; and only wish,
As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise.
At thirty man suspects himself a fool;
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;
At fifty, chides his infamous delay,
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;

In all the magnanimity of thought
Resolves, and re-resolves; then dies the same.
And why? Because he thinks himself immortal.
All men think all men mortal, but themselves;
Themselves, when some alarming shock of fate
Strikes through their wounded hearts the sudden dread:
But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
Soon close; where passed the shaft, no trace is found.
As from the wing no scar the sky retains;
The parted wave no furrow from the keel;
So dies in human hearts the thought of death.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT II.

TIME, ITS USE AND MISUSE.

Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
And seems to creep, decrepit with his age:
Behold him, when past by; what then is seen,
But his broad pinions swifter than the winds?

. . . . .

We waste, not use, our time: we breathe, not live.
Time wasted is existence, used is life:

. . . . .

We push time from us, and we wish him back;
Lavish of lustrums, and yet fond of life;
Life we think long, and short; death seek, and shun;
Body and soul, like peevish man and wife,
United jar, and yet are loth to part.
Oh, the dark days of vanity! while here,
How tasteless! and how terrible, when gone!
Gone? they ne'er go; when past, they haunt us still:
The spirit walks of every day deceased;
And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.
Nor death, nor life, delight us. If time past,
And time possessed, both pain us, what can please?
That which the Deity to please ordained,
Time used. The man who consecrates his hours
By vigorous effort, and an honest aim,
At once he draws the sting of life and death:
He walks with nature; and her paths are peace.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT II.

JOY TO BE SHARED.

Nature, in zeal for human amity,
Denies, or damps, an undivided joy.
Joy is an import; joy is an exchange;
Joy flies monopolists: it calls for two;
Rich fruit! Heaven-planted! never plucked by one.
Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give
To social man true relish of himself.
Full on ourselves, descending in a line,
Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight:
Delight intense is taken by rebound;
Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT II.

CONSCIENCE.

O treacherous conscience! while she seems to sleep
On rose and myrtle, lulled with syren song;
While she seems nodding o'er her charge, to drop
On headlong appetite the slackened rein,

And give us up to license, unrecalled,
Unmarked; see, from behind her secret stand,
The sly informer minutes every fault,
And her dread diary with horror fills.
Not the gross act alone employs her pen:
She reconnoitres fancy's airy band,
A watchful foe! the formidable spy,
Listening, o'erhears the whispers of our camp;
Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
And steals our embryos of iniquity.
As all-rapacious usurers conceal
Their doomsday-book from all-consuming heirs;
Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats
Us spendthrifts of inestimable time;
Unnoted, notes each moment misapplied;
In leaves more durable than leaves of brass,
Writes our whole history.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT II.

EFFECT OF CONTACT WITH THE WORLD.

VIRTUE, for ever frail, as fair, below,
Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,
Nor touches on the world, without a stain:
The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,
Immaculate, the manners of the morn.
Something we thought, is blotted; we resolved,
Is shaken; we renounced, returns again.
Each salutation may slide in a sin
Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.
Nor is it strange: light, motion, concourse, noise,
All, scatter us abroad. Thought, outward-bound,
Neglectful of her home affairs, flies off
In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,
And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

Present example gets within our guard,
And acts with double force, by few repelled.
Ambition fires ambition; love of gain
Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast:
Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapors breathe;
And inhumanity is caught from man,
From smiling man. A slight, a single glance,
And shot at random, often has brought home
A sudden fever to the throbbing heart,
Of envy, rancor, or impure desire.
We see, we hear, with peril; safety dwells
Remote from multitude; the world's a school
Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around
We must, or imitate, or disapprove;
Must list as their accomplices, or foes.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT II.

THE CROWNING DISAPPOINTMENT.

So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,
'Tis later with the wise than he's aware.

. . . . .

And all mankind mistake their time of day;
Even age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown
In furrowed brows. To gentle life's descent
We shut our eyes, and think it is a plain.
We take fair days in winter, for the spring;

And turn our blessings into bane. Since oft
Man must compute that age he cannot feel,
He scarce believes he's older for his years.
Thus, at life's latest eve, we keep in store
One disappointment sure, to crown the rest;
The disappointment of a promised hour.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT II.

INSUFFICIENCY OF THE WORLD.

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours;
And ask them, what report they bore to heaven;
And how they might have borne more welcome news.
Their answers form what men experience call;
If wisdom's friend, her best; if not, worst foe.
Oh, reconcile them! Kind experience cries,
"There's nothing here, but what as nothing weighs:
The more our joy, the more we know it vain;
And by success are tutored to despair."
Nor is it only thus, but must be so.
Who knows not this, though gray, is still a child;
Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire,
Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT II.

EFFORT, THE GAUGE OF GREATNESS.

No blank, no trifle, nature made, or meant,
Virtue, or purposed virtue, still be thine:
This cancels thy complaint at once; this leaves
In act no trifle, and no blank in time.
This greatens, fills, immortalizes, all;
This, the blest art of turning all to gold;
This, the good heart's prerogative, to raise
A royal tribute from the poorest hours:
Immense revenue! every moment pays.
If nothing more than purpose in thy power;
Thy purpose firm is equal to the deed:
Who does the best his circumstance allows,
Does well, acts nobly; angels could no more.
Our outward act, indeed, admits restraint;
'Tis not in things o'er thought to domineer.
Guard well thy thought; our thoughts are heard in Heaven.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT II.

THE END OF THE VIRTUOUS.

The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileged beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven.

. . . . .

A death-bed's a detector of the heart.
Here, tired dissimulation drops her mask;
Through life's grimace, that mistress of the scene!
Here, real and apparent are the same.
You see the man; you see his hold on heaven.

. . . . .

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,
Virtue alone has majesty in death;
And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT III.

THE OTHER LIFE THE END OF THIS.

"He sins against this life who slights the next."
What is this life? How few their favorite know!
Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,
By passionately loving life we make
Loved life unlovely; hugging her to death.
We give to time eternity's regard;
And, dreaming, take our passage for our port.
Life has no value as an end, but means;
An end, deplorable! a means, divine!
When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing; worse than nought;
A nest of pains; when held as nothing, much:
Like some fair humorists, life is most enjoyed
When courted least; most worth, when disesteemed:
Then 'tis the seat of comfort, rich in peace;
In prospect, richer far; important! awful!
Not to be mentioned, but with shouts of praise;
Not to be thought on, but with tides of joy;
The mighty basis of eternal bliss!

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT III.

THE GLORY OF DEATH.

DEATH but entombs the body; life the soul.

. . . . . .

Death has no dread, but what frail life imparts;
Nor life true joy, but what kind death improves.

. . . . . .

Death, that absolves my birth; a curse without it!
Rich death, that realizes all my cares,
Toils, virtues, hopes; without it a chimera!
Death, of all pain the period, not of joy:
Joy's source, and subject, still subsist unhurt,
One, in my soul: and one, in her great Sire.

. . . . .

Death is the crown of life;
Were death denied, poor man would live in vain;
Were death denied, to live would not be life;
Were death denied, even fools would wish to die.
Death wounds to cure: we fall; we rise; we reign;
Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies;
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight:
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost.
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death?
When shall I die? When shall I live for ever?

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT III.

CRUELTY.

MAN is to man the sorest, surest ill,
A previous blast foretells the rising storm;
O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall;
Volcanoes bellow ere they disembogue;
Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour;
And smoke betrays the wide-consuming fire:
Ruin from man is most concealed when near,
And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.
Is this the flight of fancy? Would it were!
Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings, but himself,
That hideous sight, a naked human heart.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT IV.

FALSE TERRORS IN VIEW OF DEATH.

WHY start at death! Where is he? Death arrived,
Is past; not come, or gone, he's never here.
Ere hope, sensation fails; black-boding man
Receives, not suffers, death's tremendous blow.
The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;
The deep, damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;
These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
The terrors of the living, not the dead.
Imagination's fool and error's wretch,
Man makes a death, which nature never made:
Then on the point of his own fancy falls;
And feels a thousand deaths, in fearing one.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT V.

DIFFERENT SOURCES OF FUNERAL TEARS.

OUR funeral tears from different causes rise.
As if from cisterns in the soul,
Of various kinds they flow. From tender hearts
By soft contagion called, some burst at once,
And stream obsequious to the leading eye.
Some ask more time, by curious art distilled.
Some hearts, in secret hard, unapt to melt,
Struck by the magic of the public eye,
Like Moses' smitten rock, gush out amain.
Some weep to share the fame of the deceased,
So high in merit, and to them so dear:
They dwell on praises, which they think they share;
And thus, without a blush, commend themselves.
Some mourn, in proof that something they could love:
They weep not to relieve their grief, but show.
Some weep in perfect justice to the dead,
As conscious all their love is in arrear.
Some mischievously weep, not unapprised,
Tears, sometimes, aid the conquest of an eye.
With what address the soft Ephesians draw
Their sable network o'er entangled hearts!
As seen through crystal, how their roses glow,
While liquid pearl runs trickling down their cheek!
Of hers not prouder Egypt's wanton queen,
Carousing gems, herself dissolved in love.
Some weep at death, abstracted from the dead,
And celebrate, like Charles, their own decease.
By kind construction some are deemed to weep
Because a decent veil conceals their joy.

Some weep in earnest, and yet weep in vain,
As deep in indiscretion as in woe.
Passion, blind passion! impotently pours
Tears, that deserve more tears; while Reason sleeps,
Or gazes like an idiot, unconcerned;
Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm;
Knows not it speaks to her, and her alone.

. . . . .

Half-round the globe, the tears pumped up by death
Are spent in watering vanities of life;
In making folly flourish still more fair.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT V.

VIRTUE, THE MEASURE OF YEARS.

WHAT though short thy date!
Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.
That life is long, which answers life's great end.
The time that bears no fruit, deserves no name:
The man of wisdom is the man of years.
In hoary youth Methusalems may die;
Oh, how misdated on their flattering tombs!

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT V.

POWER OF THE WORLD.

NOR reason, nor affection, no, nor both
Combined, can break the witchcrafts of the world.
Behold, the inexorable hour at hand!
Behold, the inexorable hour forgot!
And to forget it the chief aim of life;
Though well to ponder it, is life's chief end.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT VI.

ALL CHANGE, NO DEATH.

ALL change; no death. Day follows night; and night
The dying day; stars rise and set and rise;
Earth takes the example. See, the summer gay,
With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,
Droops into pallid autumn: winter gray,
Horrid with frost and turbulent with storm,
Blows autumn, and his golden fruits away:
Then melts into the spring: soft spring, with breath
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,
Recalls the first. All, to reflourish, fades,
As in a wheel, all sinks, to re-ascend.
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.
With this minute distinction, emblems just,
Nature revolves, but man advances; both
Eternal: that a circle, this a line.
That gravitates, this soars. The aspiring soul,
Ardent and tremulous, like flame, ascends:
Zeal and humility, her wings to heaven.
The world of matter, with its various forms,
All dies into new life. Life born from death
Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.
No single atom, once in being, lost.

[*From Night Thoughts.*]

NIGHT VII.

AMBITION.

MAN must soar:
An obstinate activity within,
An insuppressive spring will toss him up
In spite of fortune's load. Not kings alone,
Each villager has his ambition too;
No sultan prouder than his fettered slave:
Slaves build their little Babylons of straw,
Echo the proud Assyrian, in their hearts,
And cry — "Behold the wonders of my might!"
And why? Because immortal as their lord,
And souls immortal must for ever heave
At something great; the glitter, or the gold;
The praise of mortals, or the praise of Heaven.

Nor absolutely vain is human praise,
When human is supported by divine.

. . . . .

As love of pleasure is ordained to guard
And feed our bodies, and extend our race;
The love of praise is planted to protect,
And propagate the glories of the mind.

[From Night Thoughts.]

NIGHT VIII.

WISDOM.

No man e'er found a happy life by chance;
Or yawned it into being with a wish;
Or, with the snout of grovelling appetite,
E'er smelt it out, and grubbed it from the dirt.
An art it is, and must be learned; and learned
With unremitting effort, or be lost;
And leave us perfect blockheads, in our bliss.
The clouds may drop down titles and estates;
Wealth may seek us; but wisdom must be sought;
Sought before all; but (how unlike all else
We seek on earth!) 'tis never sought in vain.

[From Night Thoughts.]

NIGHT IX.

CHEERFULNESS IN MISFORTUNE.

None are unhappy: all have cause to smile,
But such as to themselves that cause deny.
Our faults are at the bottom of our pains;
Error, in act, or judgment, is the source
Of endless sighs. We sin, or we mistake;
And nature tax, when false opinion stings.
Let impious grief be banished, joy indulged;
But chiefly then, when grief puts in her claim.
Joy from the joyous, frequently betrays;
Oft lives in vanity, and dies in woe.
Joy amidst ills, corroborates, exalts;
'Tis joy and conquest; joy and virtue too.
A noble fortitude in ills, delights
Heaven, earth, ourselves; 'tis duty, glory, peace.
Affliction is the good man's shining scene:
Prosperity conceals his brightest ray:
As night to stars, woe lustre gives to man.
Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,
And virtue in calamities, admire.
The crown of manhood is a winter joy;
An evergreen that stands the northern blast,
And blossoms in the rigor of our fate.

[From Night Thoughts.]

NIGHT IX.

THE WORLD A GRAVE.

Where is the dust that has not been alive?
The spade, the plough, disturb our ancestors;
From human mould we reap our daily bread.
The globe around earth's hollow surface shakes,
And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons.
O'er devastation we blind revels keep;
While buried towns support the dancer's heel.
The moist of human frame the sun exhales;
Winds scatter, through the mighty void, the dry;
Earth repossesses part of what she gave,
And the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire;
Each element partakes our scattered spoils;
As nature, wide, our ruins spread: man's death
Inhabits all things, but the thought of man.

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